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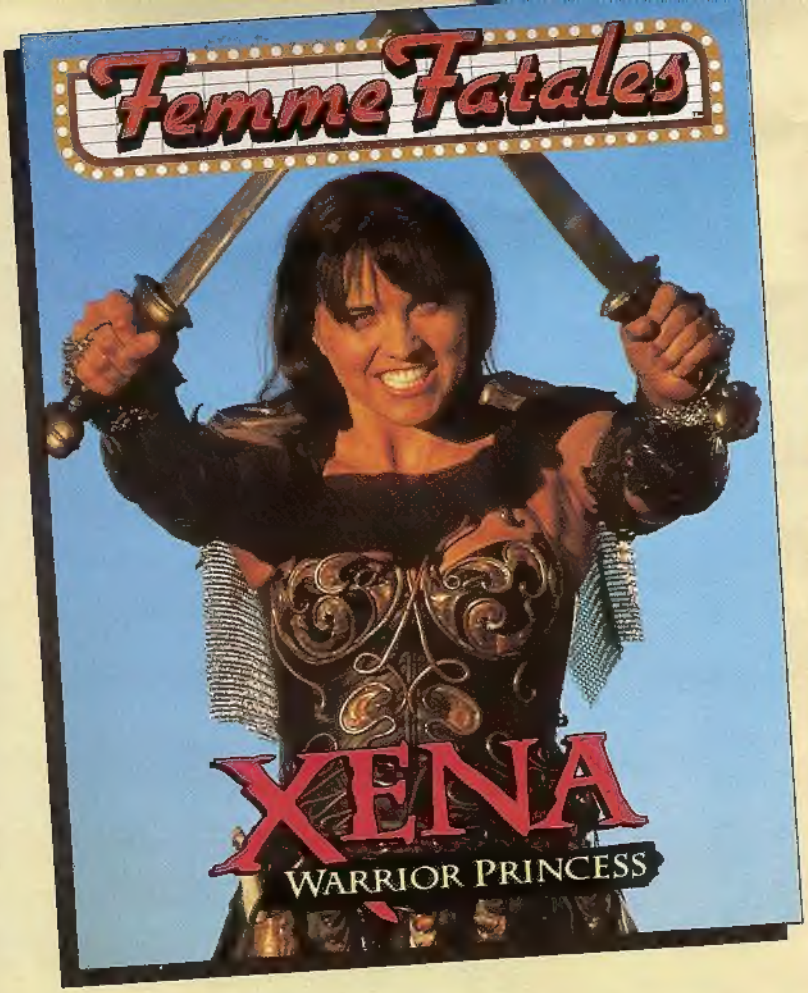
JULIE STRAIN

LONDON NIGHT'S SUPERVIXENS

Volume 8 Number 5

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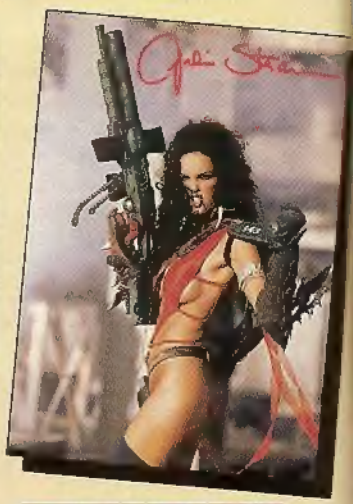
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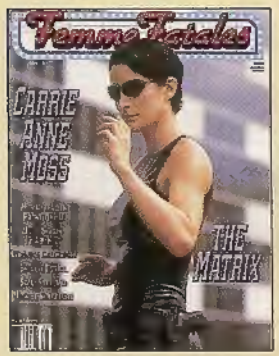


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Femme Fatales

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"I'm not bad...I'm just drawn that way."—Jessica Rabbit

One may expect that a femme fatale rendered in ink would hardly prompt any sort of contretemps—especially a fully-clothed one, who never utters a word of profanity. Well, here's a vignette that transpired back in 1991...

While cruising through Disney World, I searched—in vain—for merchandise on Jessica Rabbit. Except for "twistable" and glass figures, a candy dish, a wristwatch and an unauthorized Japanese model kit, the Jessica Rabbit franchise was conspicuously limited. I queried one of the theme park's vendors about the deficiency of toys related to Roger Rabbit's "better half." She shrugged and replied, "Jessica Rabbit doesn't fit into the Disney mold. She lacks the purity required for family trade." But, c'mon, she may be illustrated as a voluptuous bombshell but Jessica Rabbit is not promiscuous. Making her movie debut in 1988's WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT, she professed her fidelity to the sacrament of marriage. Nevertheless, Disney branded her as something of a pariah (i.e. "a bad girl"). I later learned that a retail store in the park's nightclub district, which exclusively sold Jessica memorabilia, had been dismantled.

But Disney World had no such compunctions about the sale of Madonna merchandise (tied-in with her DICK TRACY role as the decidedly unchaste Breathless Mahoney). Somehow, Jessica Rabbit—*a toon*—was decreed a morally debilitating influence, while Madonna's slinky *flesh n' blood* bad girl earned the Disney imprimatur for franchising and family commerce. Did Jessica's notoriety as a bad girl have anything to do with her bosomy assets? And if that's the case, does this qualification brand Lara Croft as a bad girl? So what the hell is a ***bad girl***? And what power is inherently planted within bad girls—illustrated for comic books and movies—that draws societal condemnation? Perhaps this *FF* issue will answer a couple of questions.

Well, a Diet Pepsi for Jenny and sake for me. See you in 3 weeks....

Bill George



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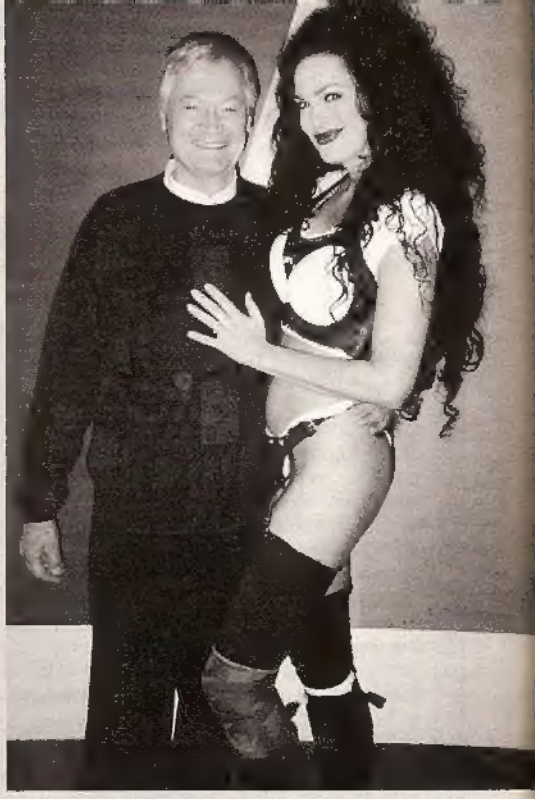
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MILLENNIUM QUEEN

WHAT'S IN THE FUTURE FOR JULIE STRAIN? SCI-FI, SEX, SHOOT-'EM-UPS & A SHOWER.

BY SANDI WEISS



Cast as the MILLENNIUM QUEEN, Strain raps with producer Roger Corman. Strain was Corman's first choice to play BLACK SCORPION on his TV series.

"The character I play in MILLENNIUM QUEEN is really kind of like me," says Julie Strain. "All she does is care about other people. She does what she has to do to survive and feed her people. Just like me. I've shown my pussy and tits all over the world, and 'killed' people for a living, and I make enough money so that I can help feed my poor little friends who are struggling actresses in Hollywood. So it's kind of parallel to my own life, but the movie is set in the future when things are much harder. And it's like 70 degrees below zero, and you're very compartmentalized into two places: you're either underground, or you're in the rich house sleeping with the senator."

But doesn't the film's title character also share similarities with Strain's "FAKK2" alter ego? "Yes, I do see a little bit of FAKK2 in her," says the actress, "and that's because FAKK2 is basically a good girl. Actually, they let me do my own thing. If anything, they kept me from going over the top because in a lot of my early movies—like my first 70, when I could not afford an acting coach—everything was just like, 'Get the boobs and the dynamite and let's go!' So for someone to be able to say, 'Shhhh, take it down a notch,' it really seemed to help me a lot."

Her abridgement of the plot: "The film opens in the year 2050, a few decades after a meteor has hit the earth. It knocked the planet out of its rhythm and everything's screwed up. We don't even know who has survived, but this culture of people is among the living. There are no books allowed, and they're very controlling, and there are only the poor, poor, people who live underground. They're growing green leaf-like things by a black light, just to be able to have some kind of greenery in their diet. That's where I come from. I'm one of the pleasure givers, the head mistress of the mistresses. I'm one of the girls who get to go up when they have parties...and we party with the big boys.

"I had a few love scenes with Jeff Wincott, and I kind of had some sexy scenes with other women. We had a great scene where they rescued me after I had an altercation with a government official; I flee on a snowmobile through freezing weather! I was completely frozen when I got on location. There was snow all over us, we were frozen to the bone. In the film, this girl [Zehra Leverman] helps me into this little, rustic shower room and helps me warm up with hot, steamy water and a sponge. It's quite a sexy scene. I think people will be very happy to see that one."

Strain as MILLENNIUM QUEEN, a government-sanctioned "pleasure giver." The actress describes the film as "a combo of SOYLENT GREEN & Orwell's *1984*."



Strain's hubby, *Heavy Metal* editor Kevin Eastman, usually performs a cameo in his spouse's movies. Did they ever do the horizontal mating dance of the African love-chickens on film (home movies, aside)? "Actually, Kevin was the ass-double in ROWDY GIRLS, a Western that I shot last year. I was pouring whiskey all over me, and I was whipping this guy named Billy in bed. We had this little love scene, but Billy wouldn't show his butt. So Kevin had to stand there and show his butt, and shake it with his little willie and all his tools hanging out for everybody, including the puppy in the house, to see. I got behind him, because a guy's not allowed to get behind a woman in a love scene since it alludes to anal intercourse. That kind of contact is not allowed on HBO, Showtime and video retail chains. But it's okay for a woman to do it. So I jumped on the back of that hillbilly ass and I was screaming, 'Ye-hah! See how you like it, Billy!' That's where you'll see Kevin's little butt."

Bursting into laughter, Strain venerates low-budget filmmaking and her B-Queen sovereignty: "I might be staying in high school for the rest of my life, but at least I'm the prom queen every year!" □

ATTRACTIONS
FATALE

BY LAURA SCHIFF

●MATRIX mega-babe/*FF* cover woman (7:17) Carrie-Anne Moss will share top billing with Val Kilmer in Warner Bros.' sci-fi movie, MARS. Moss will play a pilot who orbits the Red Planet while Kilmer leads the first manned mission to the Martian surface. When Kilmer's team meets with fatal disaster, Moss must decide whether to follow orders and return to Earth, or rescue the ex-Batman's butt. So let's see a show of hands—which do ya think she chooses? MARS is racing into production, under the helm of Anthony Hoffman, in an attempt to beat Disney's similarly-themed MISSION TO MARS into theaters. The Disney film was expected to star actress Monica Potter (PATCH ADAMS) as a space-faring gal who, along with hubby/ astronaut Tim Robbins, saves the sole survivor of a doomed Mars expedition. However, as we go to press, Potter has exited her role in the film, which is directed by Brian De Palma; instead, she'll be crossing into Universal's romantic comedy HEAD OVER HEELS, about a woman who's attracted to a possible murderer (Freddie Prinze Jr.). No word yet regarding who will replace Potter in the Disney saga.



It's Elsa Lanchester as the original BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN; her competition for the role included Brigitte Helm (METROPOLIS). So who will play the Bride in the remake?

●Universal Studios seems to be on a rebound from last year's disappointing boxoffice figures. Thanks to the $100 million-plus success of THE MUMMY, which starred Brendan Fraser and Rachel Weisz (7:17), the studio plans to remake its 1935 classic, THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN. In the original, directed by James Whale, actress Elsa Lanchester played the monster's reluctant spouse. Famed horror writer Anne Rice and EVE'S BAYOU scribe Kasi Lemmons (who played Jodie Foster's roomie in SILENCE OF THE LAMBS), have reportedly both submitted scripts for the BRIDE remake. Producer Brian Grazer, along with MUMMY producers Jim Jacks and Sean Daniel, prefer their BRIDE's nuptials to be set in the near future (approx. 2010). Several other Universal horror titles are also being fast-tracked as remakes. Look for modernizations of THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (which starred Mary Philbin and Lon Chaney in the 1925 original), THE INVISIBLE MAN (Gloria Stuart and Claude Rains, 1933), and THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON (Julia Adams, 1954. CREATURE remakes, including one pitched by John Carpenter, have been "indefinitely postponed" for over a decade). Of major interest is how the women in these films—typical maidens-in-distress who give great scream but are otherwise dreadfully underutilized—will be updated for a post-millennium sensibility.

●It's looking more and more likely that audiences will have to hunger for Hannibal the Cannibal a while longer. Universal is expected to pass at the chance to produce HANNIBAL, the long-awaited sequel to THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS, even though the studio paid novelist Thomas Harris $10 million for the movie rights. Apparently, Universal would have to shell out double that amount just to persuade Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins to reprise their Oscar-winning roles as FBI special agent Clarice Starling and escaped serial killer Dr. Hannibal Lecter. Ridley Scott is expected to direct the film, which is set seven years after SILENCE OF THE LAMBS. The plot finds one of Lecter's early victims using Clarice as bait to draw out the deranged doctor and wreak revenge. LAMBS won the Best Picture Oscar in 1991, as well as Best Director (Jonathan Demme), Best Adaptation, Best Actor and Best Actress.

●ENTRAPMENT star Catherine Zeta-Jones has agreed to headline New Zealand director Lee Tamahori's THE TENTH VICTIM. The SF movie is a remake of the 1965 Italian black comedy LA DECIMA VITTIMA, which was based on Robert Sheckley's short story "The Seventh Victim." Whassa matter? Seven victims aren't enough, anymore? THE TENTH VICTIM takes place in a futuristic society where organized murder hunts are utilized to channel violence. Zeta-Jones will play one of two rival contestants who fall in love with each other, even as they are closing in on their tenth victim. The 1965 import (released domestically as THE 10TH VICTIM) is memorable for the scene where assassin Ursula Andress dispatches a victim with her double-barreled bra.

●Actress/executive producer Majel Barrett Roddenberry, widow of STAR TREK creator Gene Roddenberry, has teamed up with actor Kevin Sorbo on a science fiction series in development for fall 2000. Following the cancellation of HERCULES: THE LEGENDARY JOURNEYS, Sorbo announced he will star in one of two series, GENE RODDENBERRY's ANDROMEDA or GENE RODDENBERRY's STARSHIP. When I interviewed Barrett Roddenberry at her Beverly Hills home last Christmas, she described STARSHIP as an animated series about seven or eight environmentalists who travel throughout the universe trying to rejuvenate dying planets. "There's no Prime Directive on this series," she told me, referring to Starfleet's most sacred commandment: thou shalt not meddle in, or alter in any way, the natural evolution of other planets and civilizations. "Gene wrote [the story treatment] back in 1974, when I think he was over at Warner Bros. sitting around waiting for Paramount to say, 'What in God's name is going to happen next with STAR TREK?'"

Look for my full interview with the delightful Barrett Roddenberry in an upcoming *FF* issue. As for GENE RODDENBERRY's ANDROMEDA, *The Hollywood Reporter* has stamped out internet buzz that the show will either be a prequel set before the classic STAR TREK series of the '60s, or center on the Starfleet Academy. Reportedly set "millennia ago," ANDROMEDA follows the time travels of one Alexander Grange, a scientist on the planet Korkrya who's thrust into a future world of war and a quest for lost loved ones.

●Meanwhile, look for two new series by producers Sam Raimi and Rob Tapert to fill the syndicated HERCULES time slot. The sci-fi/ action series CLEOPATRA 2525 is about an aspiring actress who is cryogenically frozen in 2001. She thaws out in 2525 in an environment inhabited by evil robots. JACK OF ALL TRADES is a swashbuckler set in the Caribbean, circa the 18th century. The two half-hour shows will air back-to-back. Casting is under way.

●Another TREK rumor busted: Kate Mulgrew (7:10), who plays Capt. Janeway on STAR TREK VOYAGER, told New York's WOR-TV that she has signed a contract stipulating she'll remain on the show for a seventh season. Mulgrew had previously been quoted, several times, insisting she'd like to tenure her resignation as Janeway

Ursula Andress and Marcello Mastroianni, as 21st-century assassins, in THE 10TH VICTIM. Catherine Zeta-Jones will portray Andress' role in the remake.



and pursue a theatrical career in New York. According to Cleveland's WUAB, Mulgrew says she now plans to remain in California for two more seasons.

● Kate Jackson (CHARLIE'S ANGELS) and Shannen Doherty (CHARMED) will star in a remake of the made-for-TV movie, SATAN'S SCHOOL FOR GIRLS. Doherty will play a young woman who, while investigating her sister's suicide at a private girl's academy, battles a demonic cult—the same role that was played by Jackson in the 1973 original. The second time around, Jackson is cast as the school dean (Trivia alert: another ANGEL, Cheryl Ladd, was among the alumnae of the '73 class).

● Two movies are in development that focus on pinup idol Bettie Page (6:10/11). Liv Tyler will star in a Martin Scorsese film that's based on the James Swanson/Karen Essex book, *Bettie Page: The Life of a Pinup Legend*. Purchasing the movie rights, Oscar-nominated documentarian Mark Mori approached Tyler to play the American icon who violated sexual taboos during the 1950s by posing nude in men's magazines (often in fetish/bondage scenarios). The book, however, does not allude to Page's dark side (i.e. the model's certified schizophrenia, and incarceration in state mental institutions for the assault and attempted murder of three elderly individuals). This angle, which was first made public in Richard Foster's scathing expose *The Real Bettie Page*, will supposedly be covered in a second film, THE BALLAD OF BETTIE PAGE. Produced by Christine Vachon's Killer Films, the more controversial movie will be directed by Mary Harron (AMERICAN PSYCHO) and will star Guinevere Turner (CHASING AMY).





Christa Campbell (*l*) struck poses as Bettie Page for the cover story of FF 6:10/11). Liv Tyler, cast with Ben Affleck in ARMAGEDDON (*r*), plays the cheesecake icon in a Martin Scorsese movie based on *Bettie Page: Life of a Pinup Legend*.

● Zoe McLellan (INVENTING THE ABBOTTS) will headline the cast of Silver Pictures' DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS. Filmed in Prague, under the direction of 28-year-old Courtney Solomon, D&D tells the story of an evil wizard who attempts to dethrone a young empress because she adheres to equal rights among commoners and aristocrats. The youthful sovereign is abetted by a common thief and a young sorceress, who set out to find an ancient magical artifact. Ms. McLellan will be joined by actors Justin Whalin (LOIS AND CLARK's Jimmy Olsen #2), Thora Birch (PATRIOT GAMES), Kristen Wilson (DOCTOR DOLITTLE) and Marlon Wayans. Projected budget: $28 million.

● Director Jeffrey Bydalek tells me that distribution has been found for his haunted house movie, THE EVIL WITHIN. "It's basically about a bunch of boarders who are trapped inside this evil house," he says. "Once they discover that people are missing and bodies start turning up, that's when they know there's a problem!" Carolyn Renee Smith (page 56) plays the eccentric owner of the house. "My character is a pretty weak person," says Smith. "I'm renting out this boarding house, but I'm obsessed with watching television. I'm nervous a lot and I flunked out of technical school. I don't have a boyfriend and I'm kind of a geek. It was a very challenging role because this character had a very troubled past and there's so much going on with her. It's one of the first roles I've done where I'm not playing a sexy character. I was excited about that because you always wonder, 'Am I being hired only for my body, or am I being hired for my talent?' So it was nice to know I was being hired for my talent for a change. It's so hard for me to go back and watch myself in this movie because, as an actress, you're always growing. I've learned so much since I did this role, and I could have made her an even more complicated character." Santelmo Entertainment is releasing the film on home video, and a cable deal is currently being sought.

● Surrender Cinema, a division of Full Moon, is launching their Gothic Erotica series with four 90-minute movies that combine traditional Gothic trappings with impassioned scenarios. "These films are dark and moody," says producer Pat Siciliano. "They're all directed by female directors, with an erotic content that's geared more towards women." One of the productions, DUNGEON OF DESIRE, is helmed by a female director who is billed with a "Rachel Headley" pseudonym. The other three films are directed by the mysterious Ms. C., who goes by the sobriquet Madison Monroe. The reluctance of these directors to own up to their work leaves me feeling uneasy. The plots of these films are typically overblown—prime cheese whiz in the hands of an unskilled writer or director. On the other hand, I think the concept of "Gothic erotica" for women is long overdue and could yield surprising results if done right. Of the four films, DUNGEON OF DESIRE seems to have the highest camp potential. A photographer (Michelle Turner) and her two models (Regina Russell and Amber Newman) find a magic chastity belt—yes, a magic chastity belt—while on a photo shoot at an abandoned castle. The medieval harness is really a time warp, you see, and the three babes find themselves transported back to the 15th century. Les femmes are mistaken for witches, imprisoned by an evil queen (Vanessa Blair) and thrust into a sword fight for their freedom. Somewhere along the way, they also find time to party down with a magician and a chivalrous squire. The medieval motif is reprised in DIARY OF LUST, in which a sexy scientist (Michelle Turner again) and her research subjects (Cara Keys, Julia Kruis, and the mono-monikered Mia) travel to a legendary fortress in Eastern Europe, where they relive five centuries of kinky escapades that occurred behind castle walls. Michelle Von Flotow plays a romance novelist suffering from writer's block in PHANTOM LOVE. At a Gothic castle turned bed-and-breakfast, she learns of the erotic history of the manse's founder. Apparently, the high society maiden (Griffin Drew) scandalized the gentry by having affairs with both her handsome gardener and an exotic young count. Finally, Shauna O'Brien (4:3) is ZORITA, a female Zorro who comes to the aid of a peasant village that is unjustly taxed by an evil overlord. "My character seduces the tax collector," O'Brien giggles. "Everyone who sees her comes under her sexual spell." Surrender's Gothic Erotica series will be available on home video this fall, in both R-rated and unrated versions.

● I sincerely hope that ZORITA





Erotic thriller diva Shauna O'Brien (FRIEND OF THE FAMILY) portrays ZORITA, "the female Zorro (/&!)." O'Brien posed for Linda Tinfena on the set of the Gothic Erotica movie.

is a better showcase for sex kitten Shauna O'Brien's talent than the recently deceased-upon-release BLACK WIDOW ESCORT, a sequel to THE ESCORT. Awful is the most charitable word I can think of to describe this film by Palm Entertainment. Some evil marketing genius at York Home Video described this scrawny piece of celluloid as "an intricate web of lies, lust and murder," embellishing the video box with a tangled plot of deceit and revenge that simply does not exist in the actual film. In reality, this movie is just a half-assed attempt to cash in on two titles for the price of one. Explains O'Brien, "In BLACK WIDOW ESCORT, they ended up using a ton of stock footage from the first ESCORT and we shot for like four or five days, just to add scenes to it." The recycled footage is seen in excessive flashbacks as O'Brien, a sexy serial killer undergoing rehab at a mental hospital, talks to her shrink. We're shown the same horribly choreo-

continued on page 60


HEAVY
METAL
F.A.K.K.2



Strain: "This is the original FAKK2 film poster, developed a few years ago when we were speculating on a '97 release. Simon Bisley's art, the inspiration for Heavy Metal's Fakk2 sculpture, features me fighting Lord Tyler. I'll kick his ass."

ANIMATED FILM PIONEERS "THE NEW MYTHOLOGY": FEMMES FATALES OF THE FUTURE.



Strain: "More Bisley art. Fakk2 is in the center. I love Zeek, Odin's sidekick (bottom l)...I cried at his fate. Odin (background, r) will be voiced by Billy Idol. Rumor has it that Pam Anderson will do the voice of my character's sister, Kerrie (left). Michael Ironsides does the voice of Lord Tyler (back, l)—scary."

PROFILE BY MIKE LYONS

An ass-kicker with a heart of gold. That's how actress Julie Strain describes the title character she portrays in HEAVY METAL: FAKK2. "I think FAKK2 is me, if you took me and put me in the setting of the movie. It's someone who means well, loves their family and is willing to risk their life to make things right and fight evil. Just an overall good person. She's a badass at the same time, and she's not afraid to fight a man and kick him in the balls and do what she has to do to survive."

Strain knows a lot about survival tactics. As "Queen of the B's" (as in B-movie), she has starred in over 90 films as a beautiful, statuesque, tuff-as-nails heroine, who is accustomed to battering the bad guy, mainly by means of a high kick or two barrel, usually while wearing a low-cut, revealing outfit. Producer/director Andy Sidaris, who casts the bombshell in his bikinis 'n' ballistics sagas (DAY OF THE WARRIOR, THE DALLAS CONNECTION, etc.), describes her as "the greatest coach. She's a *Penthouse* Vince Lombardi in that she coaches the girls and the crew during every production.Gorgeous, gutsy."

Now, however, Strain is saving the day in a new realm, animation, as she not only provides the voice for FAKK2, but the title character has also taken on her looks and persona as well. "It looks so much like me that...well, there are days that the animation blends so much with my real life that I don't even look at it like it's a drawing," said Strain.

HEAVY METAL: FAKK2, currently in post-production, is a sequel to the 1981 cult hit, HEAVY METAL. The first film was spawned by the popular magazine of the same name, which celebrated the art of "sequential story telling"—an optional description for *comic strips*. Through highly stylized fantasy and science fiction stories—which delved into the adult arenas of sex and violence—the magazine blew the lid off the notion that comics were for kids.



"It was a grueling shot," says Strain (t). "We'd start at nine a.m., the costume did not arrive until noon." B: Scene from the movie: FAKK 2 in the plains of Shantarr.



The initial HEAVY METAL movie, produced by noted filmmaker Ivan Reitman (GHOSTBUSTERS) and directed by Gerald Potterton (who had also helmed the outstanding animated adaptation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*), expanded on the magazine's concepts by fragmenting into a bizarre and humorous anthology of sci-fi tales, each one centering on a malicious, glowing green orb.

HEAVY METAL: FAKK2 is a labor-of-love for Kevin Eastman, the sequel's producer and screenwriter, who also happens to be Julie Strain's husband. Eastman, best known as the co-creator of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, purchased *Heavy Metal* in 1992 and promptly broadened the magazine's marketing potential. From this came a resurgence of sorts, which led to the original HEAVY METAL's debut on video several years ago. "I worked with Columbia/Tri-Star for five years trying to convince them to release the first HEAVY METAL film," recalled Eastman. "I knew that there was an entire audience hungry to see it after having seen it in 1981. I also thought that there was a whole other audience that would enjoy this as the last, R-rated, animated studio effort."

"I wanted the desperation of ROAD WARRIOR, the intensity of ALIENS, the attitude of TERMINATOR & the magnitude of Akira Kurasawa's RAN."

"Now, we have a whole new generation who missed out on the excitement of the first movie and they want to be a part of it," added Strain. "HEAVY METAL is part of being a teenager, part of growing up, it almost goes hand in hand with *Playboy*. It's part of Americana."

Two million copies of HEAVY METAL moved off store shelves and, from this renewed popularity, Eastman saw the glimmer of hope for a sequel. "When I set out to make HEAVY METAL: FAKK2, I wanted to create my own spin of some of my favorite movies and what they've meant to me," he said. "For example, I wanted something that had the desperation of ROAD WARRIOR, the in-

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F.A.K.K.2 Kevin Eastman

The "Heavy Metal" Publisher Launched a Media Empire with the Birth of His "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles."

By Mike Lyons

To paraphrase a Disney motto, "It all started with a turtle." During the early eighties, Kevin Eastman drew a sketch of a tortoise or, to be more specific, "an upright turtle with an attitude." That diminutive rendering was the catalyst for an independently produced comic book; the heroes were a sewer-dwelling coterie called the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. "I was 22 years old when I drew the first turtle," recounts Eastman. "And I had one goal in mind along with my partner, Peter Laird, which was to write and draw comic books...to tell stories. The purity of that, and the desire to do it, is how the Turtles evolved."



Heavy Metal publisher Kevin Eastman and his Fakk 2 embodiment, Julie Strain.

The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles turned into the most profitable black and white comic book in history. The property was subsequently spun-off into a pop-culture phenomena, prompting a surfeit of franchises (by 1990, *Entertainment Weekly* tallied no less than 600 merchandising tie-ins). Inevitably, Hollywood was drawn to the comic's cult popularity. Initially incarnated as an animated TV series, Eastman's vision was adapted into a feature-length film, TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: THE MOVIE. The live-action 1990 release was greeted with less than laudatory reviews. "It's not hard to compare TURTLES to the ill-fated HOWARD THE DUCK." wrote a *Washington Post* critic. "HOWARD had far better production values and special effects." But TURTLES, unlike HOWARD THE DUCK, was a boxoffice success; in fact, it was the summer's sleeper, grossing $137.27 million (supplemented by $67.65 million in rentals).

Naturally, there was a profusion of movie action figures, t-shirts, posters—anything that could support a TURTLES logo. Eastman and Laird, however, cautiously gauged all of the commerce. "We were in a unique position where we not only created the characters, but we owned them," explains Eastman. "And we had final say over everything that was the Turtles, even through to today. We knew nothing about any of these businesses that we were getting into. So it was a lot of work to study, understand—and be careful to not make a mistake that would allow some corporation to take our creations away from us."

One of the frills of his prosperity? Eastman was afforded an opportunity to purchase publication rights to *Heavy Metal*, a monthly compendium of graphically illustrated sci-fi stories. The magazine spawned an animated anthology, HEAVY METAL, that was theatrically released in 1981. As a result of Eastman's negotiating, the movie premiered on video after a protracted postponement. The commercial response inspired a sequel, HEAVY METAL: FAKK 2, an animated movie that will have its theatrical debut next year. Written and produced by Eastman, the film's title character is voiced by his wife, Julie Strain.

With a live-action TURTLES television series in the offing, and FAKK 2 in post-production, Eastman's humble b&w genesis looks comparatively antiquated. "We're at more of a 55 point, where we do business about 50% of the time and create about 50% of the time," he says. "But it's taken ten years to get to that point."

Raised in Maine, Eastman adhered to the work of his preferred artists, and has

"We not only created the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, we owned them. We avoided mistakes where corporations would take them away from us."

paid homage to the medium with The Words and Pictures Museum (Northampton, Massachusetts), which celebrates "sequential art." The archive is comprised of Eastman's personal collection, 20,000 pieces at an estimated value of $8 million. The memorabilia includes the original Batmobile from the 1989 film.

Today, Eastman collaborates with Strain on a variety of projects, including his spouse's autobiography, *Six Foot One and Worth the Climb*, released by *Heavy Metal*'s publishing appendage. The entrepreneur compares his life to "a Spielberg movie. It's been the best college you could ever attend." □



Kevin Eastman rendered Julie Strain (*l*) into FAKK 2 (*b*): Initial art expanded into a full-length, animated film ("Julie *is* FAKK 2. She made it whole.").



Strain: "My sword will be replicated as a collectible. It's not heavy, unlike the 45 lb. gun I had to hoist. Now *that's* acting."

"People are hungry for animation, hungry for more HEAVY METAL, hungry for a sexy supervixen & rock 'n' roll and something that'll combine it all."

tensity of ALIENS, the attitude of TERMINATOR and the magnitude of Akira Kurasawa's RAN. I liked all of those elements and then I twisted them into a BLADE RUNNER-esque setting. I also wanted to create a new mythology or a mythology that might be, 'What would happen if the gods, or God, were found out to be false; what would that do to society?'"

The germ of an idea that would become FAKK2 began several years ago, when Eastman created a graphic novel entitled *Melting Pot*, along with two other noted artists, Eric Talbot and Simon Bisley. When it came time to write the script for FAKK2, Eastman found that *Melting Pot* explored all of the issues that he wanted to touch upon with in the film. He then decided to combine this concept with a strong female lead. "Someone that would combine Sigourney Weaver in ALIENS with Mel Gibson from ROAD WARRIOR. But I shelved the project," recounted Eastman, "because I couldn't really put a person behind the character, and it sort of fizzled...until I met Julie Strain."

"I've always wanted to play a super hero or comic book character," admitted Strain, "and I knew that it would come my way and I was kind of patient, waiting for the right one to grow with me. I really wanted to wait until somebody was passionate about it, and took me under their wing and had the power behind it to make it a real, long-lasting and loving character, which is what Kevin is doing."

HEAVY METAL: FAKK2 centers on Julia, an innocent young woman, who is the only surviving member of her race. Noted Strain, "She's the person, if you will, to equate to Sarah Connor [Linda Hamilton's character from the TERMINATOR films]: a simple waitress who comes to be the focal point, and the person who has the key to the salvation of the planet. She has to rise to that occasion."

"It's a real hero's journey," observed Eastman. "This is what I had worked out with FAKK2."

It is the film's villain, Lord Tyler, who is behind the destruction of Julia's Eden-like home planet. "I started out with the idea that he comes in and wipes out the planet, and she goes out to seek revenge for what he's done," added Eastman. "As the story develops, you find out that there was something on her planet that literally holds the key to the universe. In her pursuit during this revenge story, she rises to the plight of the universe and what can happen to it if Tyler succeeds. She has to rise to almost a goddess level to overcome her own abilities, insecurities and muster that power to answer those questions that I had wanted to raise: Why are we here? Who put us here? What is the reality behind mythology? That is what's discovered through the story.

"My desire was similar to what we did with the *Turtle* comics, which was to go

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Strain: "This Bisley painting ran full page in Harper's Bazaar, complete with bloody balls: rumor has it that they were removed—and then restored—at the last minute before press time." Inset: "The movie's Fakk2 image couldn't be as detailed as Bisley's art. I'm thankful for every curl these artists draw for me & my Robert Duvall head."

F.A.K.K.2

JULIE STRAIN

SOME NUDITY WAS REQUIRED AT SUNDANCE: REFLECTIONS OF SEX GODDESSES & COMIC BOOK HEROINES.





PROFILE BY DAVID EVANS

It was early on a Saturday morning, maybe 10 a.m. (which I guess shouldn't be too early for a Midwesterner). I was in the shower when the phone rang. I ran to get it and there I was—a wimpy comic book nerdboy, sopping wet with a ratty towel wrapped around me—as I answered. Needless to say, I was absolutely unprepared for the deep, sultry tones of FAKK 2 herself, aka Julie Strain, Queen of All Media and B-movie icon (SORCERESS, RETURN TO SAVAGE BEACH, VICTIM OF DESIRE). Good thing I'd taken the call.

She agreed to call me back in 20 minutes, allowing me time to hastily rinse off and dress. When she did call

Julie Strain as FAKK 2. Director Jim Wynorski, who often helmed the B-movie diva, notes that "Despite her really awesome appearance, Julie has never said an unkind word about anybody."



Strain strikes poses as Bettie Page. Ms. Page, the '50s pin-up icon, reciprocated Strain's admiration: "It's Julie who keeps the flame of pin-up beauty alive today. Thank you for remembering me."

back (from L.A. on her dime no less), it turned out to be one of the most exciting interviews I'd ever recorded. I was totally bamboozled by her. During the course of our phone conversation, she was amazingly friendly, generous, even tender. She spoke with passion about her work, her fans and, especially, her marriage. Yet, she could be savagely funny and intensely savvy about her professional life and the movie business.

By flipping through her three sumptuously illustrated books—*Julie Strain: Six Foot One and Worth the Climb*, *Julie Strain: It's Only Art If It's Well Hung!* and *Sex Symbol Dynasty*—I was already acquainted with Voluptuous. Drop-dead gorgeous, with a beautiful sculptured face, sensuous full lips, deep brown eyes and a mane of long, dark hair.

In her sturdy leather boots, ripped red bodysuit and bristling arsenal of weaponry, Strain embodied the fierce yet seductive FAKK 2 on the pages of *Heavy Metal* (a magazine owned by Kevin Eastman, Strain's spouse and the creator of the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*). Renderings of FAKK 2 have also surfaced on trading cards, jackets, posters, T-shirts and other multifarious forms of merchandising.

Strain is uniquely no half-starved, anorexic runway fashion model who disappears from view whenever she turns sideways. Think of her as a powerfully built, almost mythic Amazon warrior. Or a Greek goddess. Or a comic book superheroine. I would have little trouble imagining her performing all the legionary tasks demanded of an Olympic athlete or an action/adventure icon. Physical strength, stamina, speed, agility: that's Julie Strain.

Though noon in my neck of the woods, it was three hours earlier in Strain's neighborhood. She had just finished her morning workout, which consists of running and bicycling. (I swear, even the sound of her breathing over the phone was spellbinding.) In an hour, she'd be off to UCLA where she teaches a class in photography. Strain also strikes poses for the attendant apprentice photogs. Small wonder it's the most heavily attended class in the school's history. "It's a big day," she explained. "Right now, I'm planning my wardrobe."



Strain embodies FAKK 2, her animated alter ego. "In HEAVY METAL II, she's an an avenger. She's in a rage & cruises about the universe on a vengeful quest."

"My heroes? Brigitte Bardot, Sophia Loren, Raquel Welch. They're luxurious, buxom ladies who walked the planet as if they they owned it."

Strain had just returned from her first pilgrimage to the Sundance film festival. She and Eastman were featured in SOME NUDITY REQUIRED, a behind-the-scenes "expose" of the B-movie industry that required four years of development. Directed by Odet Springer, it was one of 15 films that qualified as Best Documentary. The film chronicles the lives, careers and work of ten luminaries who are locked into the cottage industry. Interviews are flanked by clips from 45 low-budget films.

Springer just happened to shoot Eastman's initial encounter with Strain. The artist/publisher was waiting in line at an L.A. comic book store to join the her fan club. The film later jump-cuts to Eastman and Strain's wedding. "We sat with audiences," recalled the actress. "It was snowing in beautiful Utah, the site of Sundance. Every time they came to the happy ending, everybody applauded because they were so very happy for Kevin and me. As well as being a piece of art and a great movie to see, it was close to home for us."



So how does creator Kevin Eastman define FAKK 2? "Well, try to imagine Sigourney Weaver as a Terminator-like presence—but with a strong human side."

"As futuristic as comic books look, all of our minds have not yet progressed to the 20th century. Some artists regress to June & Ward Cleaver."

(Director Jim Wynorski, who helmed Strain in five movies, was also interviewed for SOME NUDITY REQUIRED. Though combative in the documentary, he described Strain to me as "Very tall. And she's always thoughtful, always giving in relation to other actors and production people. Of all the actresses I ever worked with, she in the top percentile of the 'nice' ones.")

After each screening, the Sundance Channel would usher Strain up to their cabin for an interview. One morning, the Queen-B was queried while soaking in a hot tub. It was cool. Strain partied and rubbed elbows with Kyra Sedgwick and "Davy" Arquette. Drifting out of Sundance's stuffy atmosphere, she crossed over to the neighboring Slamdance Festival for ORGASMO, a comedy "by the creators of SOUTH PARK" that later laid an ostrich egg at the boxoffice.

I asked Strain about the genesis of FAKK 2. Next thing you know, she drops into a five-year flashback. It seems Strain and Eastman have been "living and breathing" to develop a hook for a HEAVY METAL sequel. While a bachelor, Eastman had a nebulous vision that he couldn't bring into fruition. Then Julie Strain walked into his life. "Kevin looked at me," she laughed, "and he said, 'You are my superhero. You're going to be the heroine of this sci-fi movie.'

"The animated character that I influenced in HEAVY METAL: FAKK2—she has my face, body and voice—is a twin sister. I can't give away the whole story, but something happens to her sister, her family, and her planet. So my FAKK 2 alter ego goes into a rage and cruises the universe on this vengeful quest. She encounters a lot of evil characters along the way. In a way, it parallels not so much Christianity, but what God has to offer. It's the fact that if you live right and do the right thing, you can be rewarded in the end. As well, evil people will pay the price for the bad things that they do during their lifetime."

"Do you have your own heroes, Julie?"

"Oh God, yes, ever since I was a little girl," she replied. "Sophia Loren, Raquel Welch, Brigitte Bardot. Everything they did involved big, wonderful, elaborate costumes. They were luxurious, buxom ladies, who walked the planet as if they owned it. They didn't need a whip or a gun, but in these modern times, we definitely do."



Strain poses as the late Marilyn Monroe. "I admire the classic love goddesses," she says. Everything they did involved elaborate costumes. They didn't need a whip or a gun but, in these modern times, we most definitely do."

Yet, in her opinion, a woman's transitional deification into a heroine is linked to physical strength and courage. Years earlier, just before she was christened Penthouse Pet of the Year, Strain exercised her muscle in some personal contretemps. "I had to fight off a killer in my own home, who had jumped on my bed with a screwdriver to my throat. I was thinking, 'Oh, my God. I've worked so hard to get here. I'm not going to die in this grungy West Hollywood apartment. Please Lord, give me the strength to fight this guy off." Providence complied: Strain physically beat the intruder with her bare hands and threw him out the same window that he sneaked through.

"Being a hero," she added, "is also about someone who can go out and meet and greet children, kneel down to their level, and shake their hand and tell them to make their dreams come true. It's someone who can inspire other people."

We went on to talk about the comic book medium's subservient portrayal of women, a trend that will slide right into the next millennium. The success of *Vampirella* and *Witchblade* notwithstanding, I asked Strain why so many femmes are reduced to sidekick roles. "As futuristic as comic books look, all of our minds have not progressed to the 20th century yet," explained Strain. "So the people who are drawing those situations are looking back at their personal histories. They're regressing to when they were children and saw their mother and father as June and Ward Cleaver thing—you know, the husband was the boss of the household and the wife did not necessarily work. They're confused and haven't gotten the insight yet that women can be powerful and independent, and live up to the visuals that the artist has drawn on to the paper." Strain is confident, however, that the stereotype is incrementally eroding. Describing FAKK 2 as a "a 21st-century babe," the actress credits her alter ego for trailblazing an appeal that circumvents sexism.

Kevin Eastman & Julie Strain compete with THE GUNS OF EL CHUPACABRA, co-starring in Don Jackson's film about a mythic beast that eats naked starlets.



So whatever drew her to superheroic images? Exempting her poses as Bettie Page, I've rarely come across a photo of a demure Julie Strain.

"I really don't have a choice, my friend," she laughed. "I'm six-foot-one—and, with my boots on, I'm six-foot-eight. You could throw a whip or any kind of weapon in my hand and—BOOM!—I could take over. But the real trick is to live up to that image. I try to do that for people and never let anybody down. I think that's the drive, to see the reward on their face when they meet me. They don't know what to expect and, after ten minutes, they're like 'Fe-whew! You are Julie Strain and you're so nice, too.' It's the joy and the gift that it gives other people. When that bounces back to me, it's a fabulous drug." □

"We needed and wanted to put on film something that's never been seen before in either Anime, American animation or other, Disney-like films."

through and come up with a foundation of what could be possible, including things like a scene in which thousands of men would fight in a massive battle in this huge Cecil B. DeMille-style battlefield. To me, that was a best-case scenario of a movie. Then we brought it into the reality of what is physically doable under the $15-million budget that we had. We needed and wanted to put on film something that's never been seen before in either anime, American animation or other, Disney-like films. We needed to come up with something commercial that had epic scenes to compete with $80-million films like MEN IN BLACK."

Unlike the episodic original, the HEAVY METAL sequel combines these ambitious elements with a more straightforward narrative and offers genre fans a new anachronism with FAKK2, (Federation Assigned Kinogenic Killzone to the second power). "That's a label that the Federation puts on any area that would be deadly to carbon-based life forms," explained Eastman. Julia's home planet, attempting to secure themselves from the rest of the universe, start sending out distress signals, entirely cognizant that the Federation will label their planet a Killzone, thus warding off all space travelers. When Julia sets off for her vengeful odyssey, she adopts the FAKK2 handle for herself.

"As the secret is revealed of what Tyler takes from her world and does to her world, the heroine starts off as Julia," explained Eastman. "But, as the story proceeds, she takes on that name of death. What that means to Tyler, the nemesis, is that she is death to him."



T: "See the 143 near my shoulder?" asks Strain. "It stands for 'I love you.'" *B*: Scene from the FAKK2 movie. The heroine "charms" covert info from Chartog.



FAKK2's villainous Tyler has been developed as intensely as the main character, in order to provide the proper balance of foe and hero. "It's been a belief in Hollywood that if you have a really intelligent nemesis, then it takes an even more intelligent hero to defeat them," noted Eastman. "That was sort of where we started. We knew that we had to accomplish this. We've all seen Hollywood movies where you have this great bad guy, but then there's a turning point in the plot where he does something so stupid—and it's so out of character—that it blows the movie. So we've tried desperately to keep the character in check."

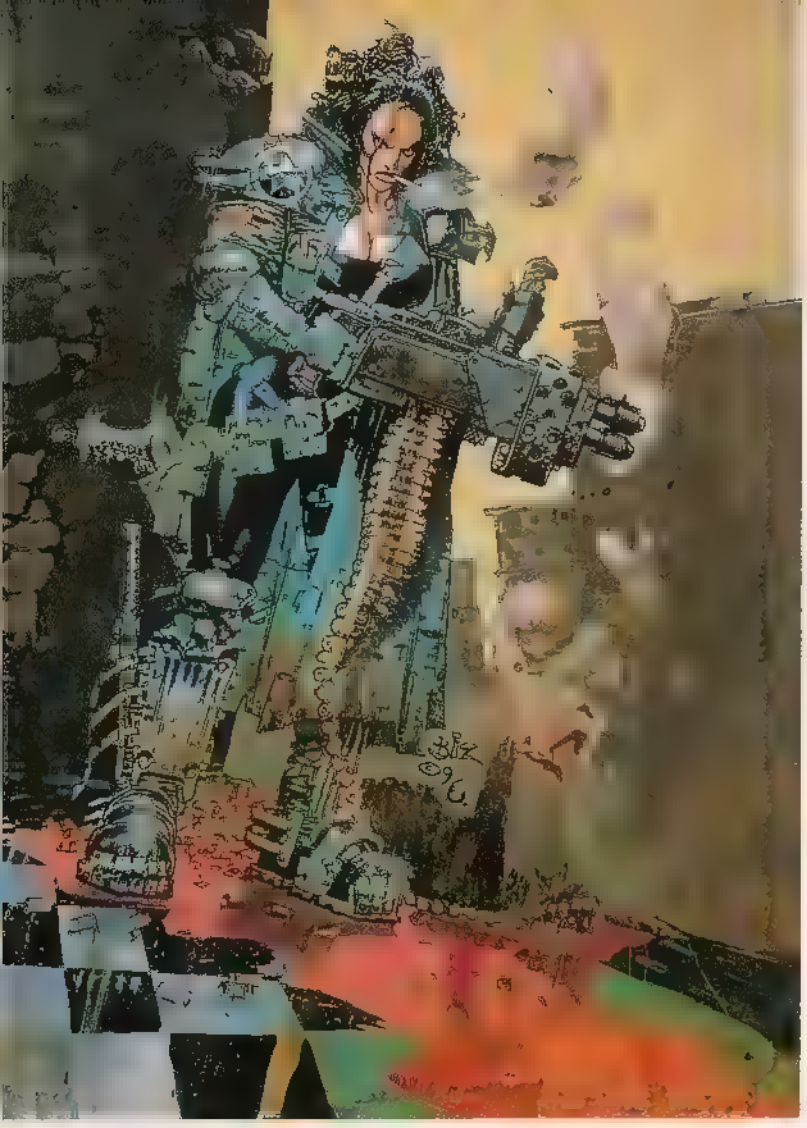
Eastman found his first influence for the character in a much maligned, recent film. "One of the great bad guys, I thought, was Alan Rickman, in ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES—the way he put life into the Sheriff of Nottingham! It was brilliant! The guy had a brain, but he was sarcastic and he had this edge about him that was terrifying. He was great."

Such characters as Lord Tyler can only credibly come to life through the collaborative talents of the artists required to create an animated film. One such illustrator, who has been pivotal in the production of HEAVY METAL: FAKK2, is Eastman's *Melting Pot* collaborator, Simon Bisley. The British impresario is applying his own distinct stamp on the film as its conceptual artist. "Through a lot of interesting techniques, we've been able to retain what Simon has created," noted Eastman. "It's this look of over-the-top technology and medieval barbarism, and we've combined that into the story. Simon visualized that completely and that's been the foundation that everything has been built on. Simon did about 70 paintings and they're plastered all over the designers' desks. They're all huge fans of Simon and they know to pull something off in that style—'Simonizing' is what I call it—would be pretty amazing."

The film's animation is currently under way at two studios, Cine Group Animation in Montreal and Trixter Studio in Munich, Germany. "The film will be hand drawn, line-by-line, then there will be digital ink and paint on top of that with a system that's been developed in both, Montreal and Germany, that has yet to be seen anywhere," said Eastman. "The German studio will also be doing a lot of



Strain: "Zeek, who is my protector, holds the limp body of Kerrie—whom he loves. This early painting by Bisley shows the green war paint, a barometer for full scale vengeance. Beware—you will be shot!!"



Strain: "The *top* is Bisley's depiction of FAKK2 on PMS. A deadly combination. *Below* is one of my favorite Bisleys. Unfortunately, it's not in our movie. But it certainly looks good...I bet it tastes really good, too. What do you folks think?"



"The original HEAVY METAL is part of being a teenager, part of growing up, it almost goes hand-in-hand with Playboy. And it's now Americana."

CGI effects, spaceships, spaceports and CGI buildings within painted backgrounds and the whole thing will be processed digitally. We've got something that no one's seen before, and I don't dare say too much."

Eastman is hoping that this very secretive animation technology is going to make for some spectacular scenes. "You want people to come out of the theater feeling that they've seen a very coherent story that says something, as well as scenes that will prompt people to say, 'You've *got* to go see this movie!'"

As of press time, no voices—other than Strain's—had been cast. Eastman was still searching for just the right talent to match the part and the art. "We want to create the characters first and then put the reality in them, as opposed to writing the character around an actor. We want to create the character as to what we need, and what we want it to be to fit the story."

For her leading role in the animated film, Strain is taking her usual histrionic approach. "I've prepared with my acting coach the same way I would for a regular feature film," said the actress. "We go through each line of the movie, we break down the script, we find motivation behind what the character does and why she's doing it. The greatest part—for me—about performing in front of the microphone is that I don't have to spend two hours with the curling iron each morning [*laughs*]. It doesn't matter what I look like."



Despite the fact that the character will bear a striking resemblance to Strain, the filmmakers are avoiding the process of rotoscoping, in which animation is simply traced over live-action reference footage (used extensively in such films as Ralph Bakshi's 1978 adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*). The end result is a bit too realistic and actually takes away some of animation's creativity. "We looked at a variety of options early on, with motion capture and rotoscoping," said Eastman, "which have all been done well with some limited suc-

Strain: "The top is Bisley's rendering of me as FAKK2. Actually, I wish my ass looked that good. That's the beauty of animation. No cellulite. B: Another preview of our animated movie, FAKK2 and Odin have a showdown in the desert."



cess. The style that we're seeking to accomplish with this film really needs to be drawn in a certain way. The team really feels that [rotoscoping] would be a hindrance at this point."

This more experimental approach will no doubt make HEAVY METAL: FAKK2 a unique addition to the current renaissance of animation. "There's a need for something new," said Eastman. "So, with that thought in mind, we're hopeful that a whole new world of possibilities and a whole new look and style of animation, will broaden a lot of people's horizons to all our benefits. Hopefully, we'll



Strain: "Top, Bisley art. Fakk2 & Kerrie in a showdown with Tyler. I kill him in the film's bar scene. But he doesn't stay dead. Below, l: Kevin Eastman's early sketch of me as Fakk2. It's her first encounter with Tyler. Below, r: From the movie: FAKK2 searches the melting Pot for Lord Tyler, who lusts for immortality and sex."





"We made FAKK2 physically doable under our $15 million budget. We had to come up with something that can compete with $80 million movies."

push some boundaries a little bit—not just visually but story wise—and I think we'll carve out our own piece of turf. We'll be all our own.

"I've met with a lot of anime producers who have said, 'The first HEAVY METAL movie is my very favorite film.' It seems odd that if that was your favorite film, maybe you'd try something new and maybe it would influence them that way. But it's going to be an interesting experiment to see what happens. You have things like TOY STORY, which was amazing, and Disney efforts are always interesting. In addition, there was DreamWorks with PRINCE OF EGYPT... and everything that's being done with PC and video games is just getting better and better. It's bringing the audience for visually stimulating stuff to a whole other level of coolness."

"I think people are going to love this movie, no matter what," added Strain. "That's because people are hungry for animation, they're hungry for more HEAVY METAL, they're hungry for a sexy vixen and they're hungry for something that will combine all of that and get them to the movie theatre, where they can hear some loud rock and roll."

And this, indeed, is what audiences will hear. Like its predecessor, the new HEAVY METAL promises a soundtrack that borrows from its title. "Our approach right now is to pick marquee names, but we're trying to select those in a way that would be good for the film," said Eastman. "We don't want to force a song on a scene, but let it be an enhancement and icing on the cake. We'd also like just below A-list artists that we could get to do new songs for the film,and we'd also like to try and find a number of breakout bands...the ones that are poised on the edge that are appropriate and interested in the film. That's the sort of theoretical approach we've taken now and we've just started pouring through demos and tapes. We'd like to develop it in the same way as the voice actors, we'd like to bring them into the film because they're interested and they think that it's cool."



Strain: "Slipping into character as Fakk2, I float between fantasy & reality. I'm not sure which is better: I'll let you know."

Cool is indeed the operative word for HEAVY METAL: FAKK2, a combination of sex, thugs and rock that will no doubt yield some interesting results. "We're not trying to sell audiences on the fact that this movie is something that it's not," said Strain. "It's HEAVY METAL, it's a $15 million-movie, we're giving you the best soundtrack that we can and the best animation that we can. It's like someone telling you that they're serving you a good old-fashioned, hot, open-faced turkey sandwich, and that's what you expect and that's what you get. If someone tells you that they're going to prepare you the best French meal you've ever had in your life, you don't know what to expect. We're telling people exactly what's coming their way." □

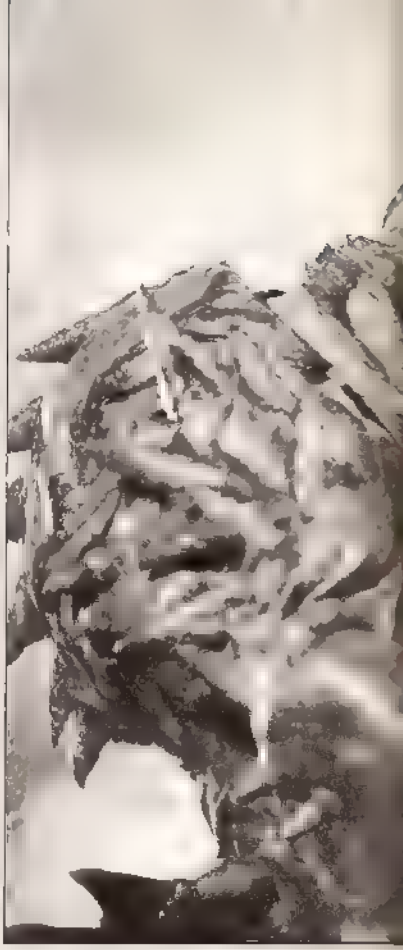
JULIE STRAIN
GUNS OF EL CHUPACABRA

THE QUEEN B ON LOVE SCENES, L.A. PARASITES & MONSTERS THAT FEAST ON NAKED STARLETS.

BY CRAIG REID



GUNS OF EL CHUPACABRA: Kevin Eastman & Julie Strain as King All Media and Queen B. The couple reprised their roles in ARMAGEDDON BOULEVARD.



Julie Strain versus the starlet eater.

Cruising up Beverly Boulevard, I brake at Julie Strain's house. I'm greeted in the foyer by Pamela Anderson. Yep, a life-sized cutout of the BAYWATCH starlet, clad in her orange, trademark swimsuit. Rendezvousing with Strain in the living room, I candidly remark, "My gosh, you are pretty tall." That's always an ice breaker. She politely giggles and volunteers a tour of the estate...

The interiors are alternately decorated dark and bright, sensuous and fanboy. The halls are bedecked with poster art and paintings of Strain, including Olivia's rendering of her as *Banshee* and an erotic confection by Hajime Sorayama. Strain introduces me to her husband, Kevin Eastman, the publisher of *Heavy Metal* and recently a film entrepreneur. I blurt out something like, "I love your Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles creations." Strike one—the man probably hears that bromide from zillions of convention nerds. He thanks me, hugs and kisses his spouse and lumbers out the front door.

Statuettes, photos, gags and gifts adorn Strain's upstairs office where we rally for our tete-a-tete. Though it was too early in the morning to apply cosmetics or stylize her hair, Strain's natural beauty is intact. Even her choice of wardrobe—baggy, loose fitting jammie-like apparel—lacks pretension.

Running fingers through her hair, the 35-year-old, self-professed Queen of All Media sighs, "Forgive me for being brain dead. I was filming three movies in one day—just yesterday!—and wearing many hats what with doing the catering, ordering, fashion designing, furniture removing. The whole bit!" Some sequences of her latest B-epic, GUNS OF EL CHUPACABRA, had been shot on the first floor and around the grounds of her home. She concedes that it's "nice to finally be interviewed by *Femme Fatales*. I'm the one who's usually pushing a pen for the magazine, with all the behind-the-scenes articles I've submitted."

So how did Strain become acquainted with Eastman? "Kevin came to the Golden Apple, a comic book store in



CHUPACABRA. Strain: "I accidentally split the head of the girl inside the suit. She was happy to be in the shot with me."

"I'm an entity, a full-busted bitch Barbarella. I'd rather be sexy and look good rather than be a great actress, and look like that chick in FARGO."

Los Angeles where I was signing trading cards. He was standing in line to join my fan club and to buy a Polaroid photo with me. He still keeps that photo on his desk. The photo reads, 'Kevin, you make me smile.' And I have been smiling ever since. He walked away with my heart as we were married barefoot on a beach, at sunset, at Martha's Vineyard. Kevin is a real cool '90s man. When we got married he adopted my name. Now he is Kevin Strain Eastman."

Prior to her marriage, Strain was "discovered" at the Sugar Ray Leonard-Roberto Duran boxing match in Las Vegas' Mirage. Someone named John Rockwell beckoned her to L.A., where he promised to make her a star. "You know," muses Strain, "I'd have been happy just to have done the extra part in the film I did, and the one page of *Playboy* I shot, then just go home and feed my horses and make 85 blowups for my friends and family. There is just a joy and reward of being on the set, and contributing to a piece of history. You've made everybody's jobs easier and the director can now send his kid to college. It's just a team effort.

"The acting bug is a drug. That kept me going through extra roles, then small roles, then leading roles and so on. I learned from the bottom up and wasn't afraid to lay each brick of my foundation, where most people want to skip floors and go straight to the top. But I wanted to lay every fucking brick on the way up."

A veteran of 92 films, she is inflexibly typecast in B-flicks, but Strain appears nonplussed by the indelible link. On the contrary. "I don't think anybody can righteously take that queen of B-movie title away from me," she insists. "Someday, when I retire, they may refer to someone else in the same capacity. But I have peed on the tree, and no other dog is going to come along and outdo me. I am swimming around and enjoying my big fish status in a little pond of forever."

Strain with CHUPACABRA's producer/director Don Jackson & co-producer/star Scott Shaw. "We worked sans script," says Strain. "It's Zen filmmaking, a poverty budget."



As a juvenile, she had little choice but to minimize her TV viewing to Three Stooges two-reelers and Popeye cartoons. Movies were very secondary. As Strain matured, she developed a fascination with screen goddesses. Bardot, Loren, Andress, Welch. "I'd rather be sexy and look good, than be a great actress—and look like that chick who did FARGO," she snorts.

"So Julie, why did you nourish an almost exclusive allegiance to B-movies?"

She stands up and sits down. Then she stands up again. "I think it's that I am this tall and this much of an entity. I'm six-foot-one; six-foot-eight with heels. There was really nowhere for me to go but to overwhelm, take over and be the queen. There is no way I am going to play the librarian, and walk through a park with a husband. I am an entity. So instead of shaping what I wanted to be, the industry shaped me and I let it happen. I'm very happy with the results. So in my image, I created this third person and sculpted this thing with bodybuilding, grew my hair long, then learned kickboxing so I could beat up people in real life. I'm a full-busted bitch Barbarella.

"Part of this persona is honing something publicly accessible. I go to conventions, comic book stores, do signings, return fan mail and send everybody something back who

writes me. It satisfies the people and gives them what they want. People who can't be obtained, like the Madonnas, hide behind big gates. They can't be met at conventions, you can't shake their hands or have your picture taken with them. Their fans get angry, but I give them a spanking, send them on their way and—"

She's distracted by a crashing sound that resonates through the whole third level. The crew from THE GUNS OF EL CHUPACABRA have arrived. It is Strain's umpteenth movie for eclectic director Donald G. Jackson. This one has something to do with the legendary goat sucker of Puerto Rico. Apparently, the mythological monster has altered its menu, preferring naked L.A. ingenues on its dinner table. As homage to Strain, Jackson tailored a character who answers to the name of Queen B. The actress agreed to be cast in the film—*sans* salary—providing she could play opposite her husband. Jackson, of course, recognized a bargain when he saw it.

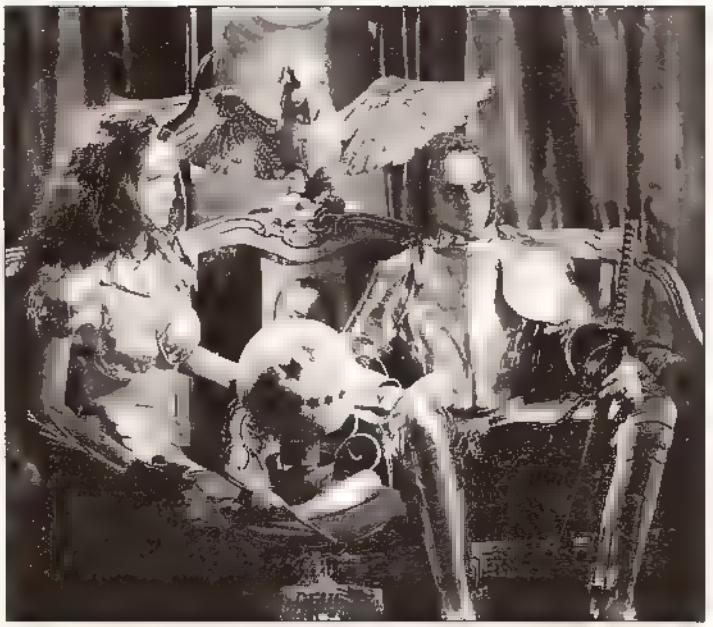


"Kevin has been in two other movies with me," says Strain. "I just want to find more time to be with him, and this is one way."

I ask Strain if she and Eastman are speculating on parenthood: "We've been married two and a half years, and we have no kids and five turtles. No children in the future. We work so hard and, even though we are in the same room and six feet apart, we are still so desperate for more honeymoon time. The last thing we are going to do is have another human being sitting between us, our kid or not. Sorry.



CHUPACABRA. "I wore my Sunday best for the *top* shot," says Strain. "Kevin Eastman, *below*, was so hot in that armor he was gonna pass out! I wanted to have sex and make sparks fly. Conrad Brooks [*r*], who was in PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE, insisted he was actually from another planet. I believed him."



"I have a love scene with Kevin in CHUPACABRA, and that's nice because he got to see how technical it was, and that it's not about physicality but trying to look good for the camera. He was good about me doing love scenes, from day one, because it was either doing them and continue my career or quit that day and never work again."

When an actress is obligated to appear impassioned on film, is it difficult to be equally intimate at home? "When I get home after a physically demanding day, I am completely worn out," admits Strain. "These aren't short, eight-hour days but 12-hour days—and that doesn't include the two hours for my hair. Kevin understands that and it's kind of an unspoken thing. Plus, there is all this time put into showering, shaving, doing the lotion, tweaking the eyebrows, waxing certain areas ...it's like taking a car to the shop."

So how long can she keep this pace up? "We are going to retire when I'm 40. I hope I can go quietly, but I am a Christian so I have given that worry to God. So I just enjoy each day now because we have a roof over our heads and a fridge full of food—things that actors usually can't enjoy. [*Pauses*] Yes, the nudity and love scenes probably doesn't sit right with a lot of Christians. But who are they to judge? I address Christianity in my book, *Six Foot One and Worth the Climb*. It's called 'The Witnessing.' If I can save one soul—that's one going to heaven because I showed my tits—then I have done my job for Jesus. *Tits for Jesus!!* That's my motto."

Have past experiences prompted Strain to become more cynical about the business? And how about the "pals" who try to pick Strain

"My nudity is vilified by Christians. If I save a soul—that's one going to heaven 'cause I showed my tits—I did my job. My motto: Tits for Jesus."

and Eastman's pockets for film financing? "I don't have a problem not trusting people in Hollywood," she insists. "If someone starts pitching me an idea or hits me with a script, I just nip it in the bud and say, 'Nope. I don't do that, I'm just the talent, sorry.' Then walk away because that's all they wanted from me in the first place. I am not looking for new friends, my days are already full. I have my five or six girlfriends so I don't incorporate people into my life off the set. I mean, I can't take ten people into my life off each project that I work on. Some people do that, but I have a husband who needs love so I can't spread myself thin anymore.

"I'm pretty much the same person. The fact is I'm 35, a millionaire and happily married, but I still do nudity and pose for *Penthouse*. *Penthouse* was one of the first to believe in me and gave me money to help my career. I was too busy working to have any worries about being moral or immoral. I'm still doing what I used to do, I just have more jobs. Amazingly, the only misconception about me is when the paper in my hometown Walnut Creek printed that I liked to strip and show off my body. What they missed was the rest of the paragraph, where I explained that I enjoyed my role as a stripper in a movie. But I don't care what people think of me." □



Strain: "Me in my PMS bra. You'd had better look me in the eye—or risk going blind. Anyway, everyone just winged it on the EL CHUPACABRA sets. It's a fabulous style of filming."




Lisann DeVaul poses as P.J. Savannah. "P.J. is one of the heirs to Sheena of the Jungle's legacy. Jungle girls appeal to guys because of the genre's blatant sexuality: sweat, very skimpy bikinis & they're often literally in the soup."
THE ADVENTURES OF
LISANN DEVAUL
A JUICY JUNGLE TEMPTRESS (AN OPTIONAL LARA CROFT) SWINGS INTO ACTION.

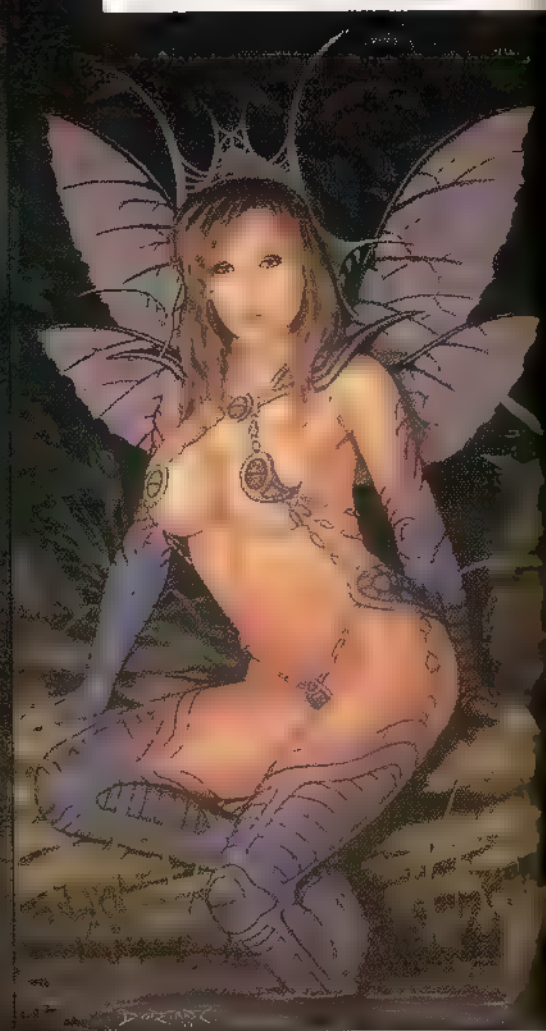
PROFILE BY
SANDI WEISS

"The allure of fantasy art is centered around basic human conflicts and needs. Real-life dramas, desires and fears are addressed in dreamlike, fantasy situations, using idealized male and female figures as heroes and exaggeratedly, evil creatures as villains. A few sexy bodies just make it all more fun!"

—Boris Vallejo and Julie Bell

When the *FF* editor handed me an assignment—"female-driven, sci-fi/fantasy tableaux"—I was a tad perplexed. For one, I am no art critic. Second, I wouldn't know a science fiction artist if she/he literally collided into me on the Washington

DeVaul *(l)*: "I don't know how to define my sex appeal. I'm just glad it's there!" *Below*. "This is artist Dorian Cleavenger's rendering of me. His women are strong, zero vulnerability."



Turnpike. My mission was to research the allure of this brand of art over more conventional works.

Like any good detective, I examined my options. Who are this genre's operative artists? And who are its most celebrated models? Through some homework, I learned about an abridged evolution of art related to science fiction. A couple of generations ago, pulp covers rendered women into nearly naked (i.e. vulnerable) fodder for perverse doctors, carnivorous trolls and horny aliens. Today, certain artists perpetuate the misogyny. I have the feeling that Hajime Sorayama thought THE STEPFORD WIVES was a tear-jerker, emulating the film's "happy ending" with a fetishistic melding of machines with women. Whenever Sorayama strays from these bionic bondslaves (aka "Sexy Robots"), he opts for women to be tethered and disciplined by futuristic hardware. It's surrogate rape, all rendered with a Sadian panache.

But, within the mainstream, Sorayama is the exception. Not the rule.

Dangerous Curves

Stacy E. Walker is the preferred model of classical illustrators—Boris Vallejo, Julie Bell, Joe Jusko, Dorian B. Cleavenger (aka Dorian), the Hildebrandt Brothers—who have rendered her into mythical femme fatales. I asked her why women, depicted within the realm of sci-fi/fantasy art, are so uniquely appealing to males...

"Aside from the fact that those ladies are routinely painted as bodacious babes?" smiled Walker. "There are a lot of babes in every art form and medium, but women matched with sci-fi are usually the ones who have the most dangerous curves. They are usually pretty tough, and I think that guys are kind of drawn to the fact that those icons are conceptualized as beautiful, sexy and erotic, as well as smart and strong. Also, we embody characters who are as assertive as men. We can kick the shit out of our opponents. Other than that, the sci-fi illustrations are pretty much the ultimate escape from reality. It's all dependent upon the artist's imagination; just by looking at one painting, you can zoom off into a whole other environment that never existed for you before."

STACY E. WALKER: SCI-FI MODEL

"There are a lot of babes in every art form and every medium. But models matched with sci-fi are usually the ones who have the most dangerous curves. Beautiful, sexy, smart and strong."



DeVaul as P.J. Savannah: "My character can handle herself in the jungle, but she's not afraid to be feminine. Like me, she gets herself into predicaments."

"From Dali to comic books..."

"It's all akin to bringing your dreams to life," explained the aforementioned Dorian, who co-developed Wicked City Studios with artist David Nestler. "Fantasy art covers a wide spectrum—anything from Dali to comic books. Fantasy is showing something that doesn't exist.

"Because I love to work out of the imagination, I love things that don't exist; but they *could* exist, and the only way to really bring that to fruition is to create it on paper. It's endless, as far as what you can come up with. It will never be boring art because it's always as good as one's imagination. To me, it's a way of exploring some of my dreams. It's more of a personal thing for me but if people like it—or even relate to it—then that's even better. I know a lot of people have fantasies, but they can't really put them down on paper or canvas. So art might be a way of sharing some of that with them."

Feed Your Head..

Functioning professionally only during the past few years, Dorian attributes his fondness for fantasy to childhood screenings of horror and sci-fi movies. ("They fed and stimulated my imagination.") He initially plied his trade by illustrating comic book covers with out-of-this-world scenarios. "Until then, I did corporate art out of necessity more than anything else," recalls Dorian. "It was a way to make a living and still connect with the art world." A casual examination of Dorian's work, with its sassy women wielding steel against medieval backdrops, offers sufficient validation that the corporate world has lost him for good.

"I've been working with a lot of Playmates as models," continued Dorian. "I've worked with them on their websites and painted portraits of them in some sort of fantasy situation." Past models have also included Roxanne Michaels and Julie Strain; the latter's portfolio surfaced, earlier this year, in *Heavy Metal* magazine.

Thriller Light

While Dorian is often de-

scribed as a fantasy artist, partner David Nestler is pegged as a pinup illustrator. "Mine is an appreciation of the female form or female art," said Nestler. He tosses out names and phrases like "Betty Grable," "girl-next-door," "all-American." "I photograph models first, then I work from the photographs. That's when I make my adjustments. One good thing about painting, as compared to photography? I can anatomically embellish a woman with a third eye. I can make a woman nine feet tall and put horns in her head. But it's always nice to portray the girls as I see them, and make sure I capture their likeness. We all feed off of each other.

"My new illustrated series, *P.J. Savannah*, is an excuse—so to speak—for attending comic book conventions. I developed a comic character who's a sort of female Indiana Jones. One thing I do when I start a series is do a lot of research. I like to see what people are thinking about and what they're looking for. Keeping abreast of your competition is always a good thing. And I realized that a lot of the female characters out today, especially in comic books, are akin to *Lady Death*, *Witchblade* and *Purgatory*. They're just dark, brooding, violent, kill-'em-all type characters and I wanted to go pull back 180 degrees. I decided to take it back to the forties, and also pay homage to *Playboy*'s Little Annie Fannie; but, unlike Annie, P.J. is more contemporary and not such a nitwit. The whole thing just is going to be more pinup oriented: sexy, fun, humorous, cartoonish. I wanted to do something a little more fun like it used to be a couple of generations ago—stuff like THE PERILS OF PAULINE and Betty Boop. American pinup was always the girl-next-door, but I like to have it be a little bit smarter, a little bit more humorous and a little edgier."

DAVID NESTLER, P.J. ARTIST

"Today's female comic book characters, like *Lady Death* and *Witchblade*, are dark, brooding violent types. I decided to take it back to the '40s & also pay homage to Little Annie Fannie."



DeVaul: "My heroine, P.J. Savannah, is not unlike Jane Fonda's portrayal of Barbarella: a bit naive, she not always realizes what she's getting herself into."

"Do you have anyone in mind to model as P.J. Savannah?" I asked. Like, what was I thinking?

Role Model

"Lisann DeVaul *is* P.J. Savannah," Nestler proclaimed. "She's a very hard working girl. I like the body type that she has: great look, great eye contact. That's why I chose her for P.J. She's got a lot of attitude, which is the way I want my character portrayed. Spunky is a good word for it—not a naive bimbo-type.

"Lisann isn't very tall, she's long-legged and short torsoed. But no matter what position I put her in, she looks like she's nine-feet tall. I think that it was always her eyes that really struck me. There's a lot of energy behind them, they're really bright! She's a really beautiful girl. It's an attitude about her. We work so well together.

"A couple of years ago, Lisann initially posed for my *Blonde and Gagged* series. This was my introduction into the pinup and erotica art market. It's kind of a play-off on fetishism. It was a dark twist on classic American pin-up art, but still retained a lot of the same stuff. It doesn't go too deep. I imply a lot of sexuality in my work. Implication is so much better than exploitation. That's exactly why lingerie calendars sell ten to one over calendars that stress full nudity. The first time I did *Blonde and Gagged*, it went over really, really big. It kind of threw me out there. And Lisann has posed for more paintings in that series than any of the other girls I've worked with."

Lights, Camera, Action Figure!!!

So why would a model prefer identifying with a tanned and tempestuous safari sister over a conservative, "pretty in pink" prima donna? "I cross over from one to the other," said Stacy E. Walker. "I prefer the babe with the blade. I was drawn to Yvonne Craig's Batgirl as a very young child. I'm obviously supported by *Femme Fatales*; among the Fifty Sexiest Sci-Fi Femmes [7:10], Yvonne was gauged as #1! When my brother used to watch BATMAN, I was never really interested...until Batgirl was written into the show. I thought she was awesome because she had this beautiful red hair, she rode a motorcycle and did all of these really cool things. From then on that was the kind of woman I wanted to be. You can have this incredible dangerously curved body and be very sexy...very erotic. You could be smart and tough as nails, all at the same time."

The Nymph Dimension

She flips through some glossies of herself as a sort of blonde, bewildered Bettie Boop who's wearing only a pith helmet and simmering in a cannibal's pot. "This is a character I've tested for a French publication," explained Lisann DeVaul. "Her name is Michelle, 'the virtuous girl good enough to eat,' who's inspired by Jean Claude Forrest's *Barbarella*. I'm flattered they want me to pose, and they offered me a piece of the franchise; but I may have to pass on Michelle—there may be too many similarities to P.J. Savannah. I'm doing a lot of work with David Nestler and Dorian at Wicked City Studios. They've given me the opportunity to portray different characters, act out little fantasies or whatever. It's all infinitely more inventive than traditional glamour/pinup art.

"The significant difference between them is David's painting reflect real-life fantasy. Dorian's concepts are more in the league



Sci-fi siren DeVaul [*l*] modeled for David Nestler's *Blonde & Gagged* series (*b*). "I don't think this art has crossed the line. There's no pain, no real restraint. It fascinates women!"

of sword and sorcery, what with dragons, fairies and water nymphs.

"One of the reasons I like working with David is that we struck up a good rapport, three years ago, while working on his *Blonde and Gagged* paintings; that illustrative series was our first project together. After we shot the first one, I just started goofing around. Next thing you know, Dave's photographer keeps snapping pictures, and we came up with a totally different idea than the poster image that had been originally pitched. And it ended-up becoming our best seller. He lets me have some creativity, but it's always all him. They're all his ideas, but he lets me become the characters."

"That jungle sort of thing..."

"P.J. Savannah is turning into a blast," laughed DeVaul. "I's my most rewarding collaboration with David. We're just having a great time and we're hoping to turn P.J. into a mini-industry, including comic books. Someone already asked me if there's a movie spin-off coming out!

"P.J. is like a literal babe-in-the-woods thing. In this case, the woods is a jungle filled with hungry human and animal predators. In retrospect, P.J. is a lot like me...always ending up in these weird situations. I don't even know how I get into them. One art scenario has huge lobsters chasing after P.J. because they want to cook her for dinner. And I constantly get into these strange situations in my own life, so I associate strongly with her. She and I are perpetually swinging on vines. Just when you're flying through the air, one of the vines turns out to be a big snake. Now what the hell do you do?"

Bondage and Broomsticks

I flashbacked to DeVaul's *Blonde and Gagged* poses, querying if the series' inherent fetishism—specifically, submissive women—is sexist. "It looks a little like bondage," shrugged DeVaul. "But not really. It's more an insinuation. I mean it's not hardcore bondage, which I do find slightly intriguing...I find it *very* intriguing. But I don't pose for the hardcore stuff. I find Dave's work to be fascinating. He has so much depth and texture to his work. We tend to have a lot of fun at shoots. David did a trading card set called *Great American Pinup Artists* and, on the back of one card, he wrote about when he walked in and handed me a roll of duct tape and said, 'Here's your costume.' That's the kind of stuff he does on a shoot.

"We were doing a session for a *Sheena, Queen of the Jungle* comic book cover and, since we shoot a photograph first, they shot me holding a broomstick because we didn't have a spear prop. For some reason, I would have preferred a mop."

LISANN DeVAUL: SCI-FI MODELS

"I go less for blood baths and more for movies about aliens : stuff like CONTACT—Jodie Foster was so brilliant—and the silly MARS ATTACKS. I really never got into that horror movie thing."



DeVaul: "The 'sex symbol' stuff is okay. But I admire Geena Davis. Even when she plays a gritty role, she's classy. She has a distinctive look, she's so sexy."

Ghosts, Goblins, and Aliens–Oh My!

DeVaul professed a personal intrigue "for all things that are supernatural— poltergeists, ghosts, that kind of thing. And I don't rule out the existence of aliens. I practically grew up with STAR TREK. My grandma had me watching every single episode. She actually bought me STAR TREK ornaments for my Christmas tree!

"I go less for blood baths and more for movies about extraterrestrials, stuff MEN IN BLACK and INDEPENDENCE DAY even though both films are kind of mild. Within the last month, I've watched a couple of movies that I loved: CONTACT—Jodie Foster was so brilliant—and the silly MARS ATTACKS. That's the kind of thing I get into. I never got into horror movies."

Once Bitten...

Nevertheless, DeVaul has been cast in a couple of horror films. Admitting only that she performed as eye candy, she's declines to identify the titles of the poverty row quickies: "The first one I did had a budget so low it was nearly invisible. But I got bit by the bug and decided to try more. So I subsequently did a tiny part in a film that was shot in my hometown...I'll only tell you that one of my inspirations, Brinke Stevens, played a featured role." And then, DeVaul abruptly changed the subject...

"I did a cameo in Kevin Smith's film, DOGMA, which provoked some controversy. And I briefly worked with Kevin Summerfield on CARMILLA. Though my role was very

diminutive, Mr. Summerfield invited me to play a role in his next film, ANGEL BEACH. (Summerfield's response: "The project is planned for later this year, and we'll definitely hire Lisann for a beefier role. She was a trooper on CARMILLA, so I'd certainly welcome her back again to the set. She's got a nice look. When I first met her, she looked like Gillian Anderson from the X- FILES. She's very camera friendly. and that sure helps when you're doing an action film.")

Y2 Klingon

DeVaul's latest gig? "I did a calendar here in Pittsburgh with a Klingon from the Klingon Assault Group. There's a picture of me and this big Klingon guy! Benefitting a national children's charity, it's called *Damsels Not In Distress*. That's me!" □

DeVaul (*r*): "Me as P.J., mesmerizing and maybe on someone's menu." *B*: "David Nestler turned a photo of me into *Snake Eyes* art. In reality, I hung on a pole with one toe on the floor."



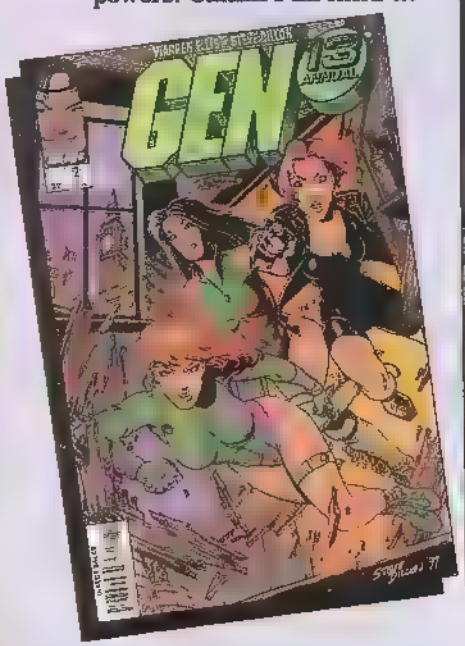
GEN 13'S ANIME SUPERHEROINES

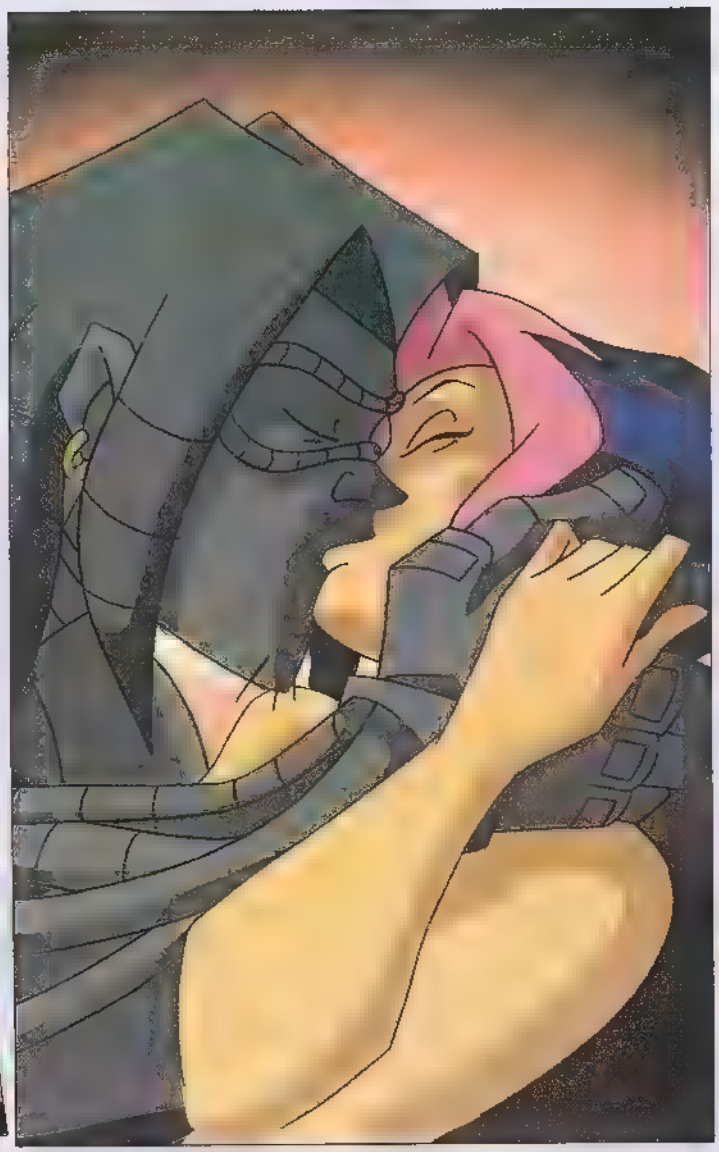
FULL-LENGTH ANIMATED MOVIE'S SHOWDOWN: VILLAINOUS VIXEN VS. A FEMME WHO TURNS FROM TIMID TO TEMPESTUOUS HEROINE.

BY DAVID EVANS

Kevin Altieri, director of GEN 13, reflects on his feature-length adaptation of Image's comic book series: "It's loosely based on the first five issues. There are three major heroes: Fairchild, Roxy and Grunge." (Presumably, two other significant characters—Burnout and Rainmaker—didn't make the cut).

The *Gen 13* comic book involves a group of twentysomethings who are abruptly endowed with extraordinary powers. Caitlin Fairchild develops super-strength and invulnerability. Freefall, aka Roxanne "Roxy" Spaulding, can fly and alter the mass of any object she touches. Tattooed surfer dude Grunge, aka Percival Edmund Chang, mimics the molecular structure of any object or person he touches.





A spin-off from the comic book (*l*), GEN 13's sci-fi scenario explores rebellion, friendship, self-esteem and a liaison between the heroic Grunge and Roxy (*t*).

The story opens at an Ivy League university on the eastern seaboard. "There's this good, smart girl, Caitlin Fairchild," says Altieri. "She's kind of mousy and doesn't know how attractive she is, and she's having a hard time at college. She's smarter than everyone else and this alienates her from the other students." But a dark past haunts Fairchild's psyche. "Both her parents are gone. Her father, who was a soldier, mysteriously disappeared during the Vietnam War."

The plot subsequently picks up speed when Fairchild is pitched an offer she can't refuse. "She thinks it's some kind of ROTC program, which, if she takes it, will give her a major educational opportunity that she could not otherwise afford." Transported to a secret base in a desert wasteland, Fairchild is acquainted with Roxy and Grunge. "But the whole thing, she finds out too late, is a clandestine-



The voice of siren Ivana Baiul belongs to Lauren Lane (THE NANNY'S C.C. Babcock) "The villains of GEN 13 will sacrifice anyone to get what they want," notes director Kevin Altieri. "Ivana, almost an evil politician, wants to be a dictator."

government operation," says Altieri, who compares the premise to a twisted variant of *Captain America*'s Super-Soldier Program. "She goes from being this virginal, mousy girl and gets transformed into Raquel Welsh with the power to crush tanks. She's super-strong, like the Incredible Hulk, with no upper limits on what she can do."

The comic book's illustrators have rendered Caitlin Fairchild into a six-foot, long-legged Aphrodite, who is so voluptuous she makes Lara Croft look like a toothpick. But the movie has somewhat deflated Fairchild's bosomy presence. Notes Altieri, "She goes from being a mere five-foot-five who wears thick glasses, and is always tucking her hair behind her ears, to a six-foot-five, red-headed goddess whose hair is always perfect no matter what crisis might strike. Like the comic, Fairchild is truly the star, the standout character."

Altieri's story introduces a covert agency that, decades before, recruited fathers of all three kids during the Vietnam War. These men were "recreated" as super-soldiers. But angered with being manipulated by a nation they served, the men turned rebellious. "They didn't want to become just hired assassins," says Altieri. "So they refused to cooperate and the government had them killed."

Years later, the children of the slain soldiers are tracked down. "Fairchild and her friends are the next generation, the offspring," explains Altieri. "The agency thinks that if they go with kids, they'll be more easily controlled. But that thinking turns out to be dead wrong."

The film's vocal talent includes Alicia Witt (MR. HOLLAND'S OPUS) as Ms. Fairchild and E.G. Daily (STREETS OF FIRE) as purple-haired punk Roxy. Flea, bassist for The Red Hot Chili Peppers, gives voice to Grunge. John de Lancie (STAR TREK: BORG) strikes a chord as John Lynch, a grim ex-intelligence agent. Cloris Leachman's Frau Bluecher voice—accented in YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN—is infused into Helga, the team's stern but maternal drill instructor. Altieri reminds me that Helga's visibility was reduced to one page of the original comic book. Expanding the role, he praised Leachman's ability to do everything in one take.

"Caitlin Fairchild transforms this virginal, mousy girl into Raquel Welch with the power to crush tanks. Super-strong like the Hulk, there's no limit to what she can do."

The bad guys: Lauren Lane (THE NANNY's C.C. Babcock) imbues dragon lady Ivana Baiul with a sultry vocal demeanor. Mark Hamill, who dubbed The Joker for Altieri's BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES, voices Threshold. Altieri has assured me that his villains are irredeemable, mean-spirited, self-centered and egocentric: "They have a clear agenda which only serves their personal needs. They'll sacrifice anyone to get what they want, which is power. Ivana's almost an

Kevin Altieri describes Caitlin Fairchild (*b*) as "the standout character in GEN 13." She shifts from "a waif who wears thick glasses to a redheaded goddess."



GEN 13 director Kevin Altieri also helmed the revolutionary BATMAN animated series & movie spin-off.





A clandestine government operation endows Caitlin Fairchild with superpowers. "At first, she's kind of mousy & doesn't realize how pretty she is," says Kevin Altieri."She's smarter than everyone else & this alienates her from other students."

evil politician. She procures black budget money to run a program to create SPB's [Super Powered Beings]. With them, she's looking to make herself president of the United States and then absolute dictator."

Altieri launched his link with animation back in 1985, when he functioned as storyboard supervisor and assistant director on THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS. "Which means," he cynically relates, "that I was the director." He also worked on the animated ALF and ALF TALES. The first series was a chronicle of Alf's teenage years on planet Melmac; the latter was Alf's extremely skewed revisions of popular fairy tales.

"It was a bit of a struggle," explains Altieri, "because [the medium] has one-week turnarounds. It was just a hellish schedule. I was always pushing people to the limit. We had to make it fast and good."

Altieri worked for a brief time at Disney, where he contributed to the development of THE LION KING, SWAN LAKE and TREASURE PLANET. "I never got to direct a cartoon at Disney," he laughs. "I didn't last long enough there. I thought I was over with animation. But then I heard that Warner Bros. was going to do BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES. And my first reaction to that was, 'Yeah... yeah...yeah...right. Here we go, another SUPER FRIENDS.' But I said, 'Well, okay.' I directed it. The schedule was crazy with five shows a week, no way to maintain quality. But I had Bruce W. Timm and [AEON FLUX animator] Peter Chung to do character designs. It turned out to be an amazing kind of film noir cartoon with Art Deco, deep shadows and big graphic shapes. It was a whole new approach to animated filmmaking."

"BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES turned out to be an amazing kind of film noir cartoon with art deco: It was a whole new approach to animated filmmaking."

Altieri describes the cartoon milieu of GEN 13 as "Three basic environments where the action takes place. There's the lush, wooded New England landscape where Fairchild is going to college. Then there's the desert vistas of Monument Valley, Utah. Finally, there's the almost alien-like technology of the secret base, where these kids get transformed in heroes."

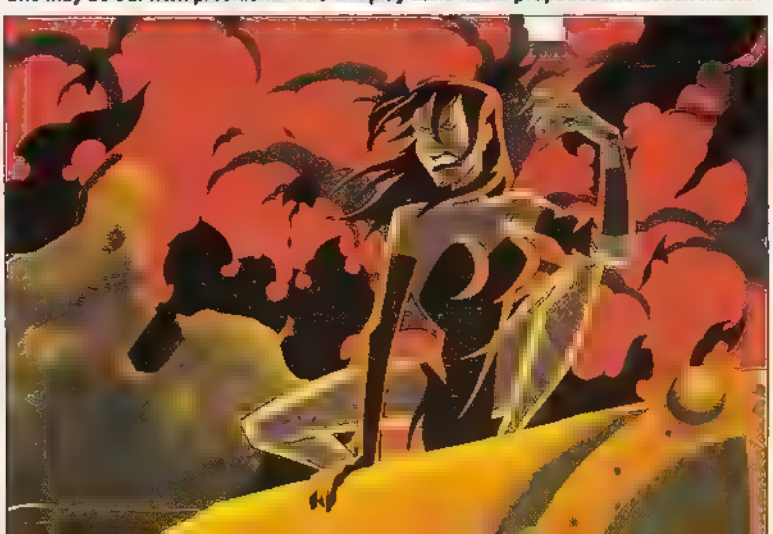
But why should audiences empathize with cartoon characters who are buttressed with superpowers? "Because these kids have good hearts and they help," replies Altieri. "They have a sense of honor. They're loyal to their friends and they don't turn their backs on responsibility. Right from the word *'go'* you know Caitlin Fairchild is a good person. So when this government group starts giving her and the other superpowered kids orders, which the kids realize are wrong, they rebel. They're not just weapons that act on command. They refuse to fight when they don't believe in the cause. Of course, that's when the government attempts to kill them...just like it did their fathers.

"One of the key plot points is when Caitlin gets separated from Roxy and Grunge. Ending up in the middle of the desert, she fights till she can escape. Then she suddenly finds out that she can run 60 mph. Caitlin realizes, at that point, that she could just take-off and leave without Roxy and Grunge. Yet, she can't abandon them so she goes back to help.

"The kids question authority. They don't listen. They don't understand what's been done to them. But, again, they won't knuckle down and take it anymore"

Altieri notes that the Disney company, which owns the distribution rights, is talking about "doing a live action" adaptation of *Gen 13*. □

Luscious & lethal Lauren Lane supervises the SPB program (Super Powered Beings). She may be our next president! Who will play Lane in the proposed live action movie?



GEN 13 CREATOR J. SCOTT CAMPBELL

HIS HEROINES, INCLUDING LESBIANS, ARE "THE RAGE IN COMICS."

BY DAVID EVANS

They're pen and ink, right? Nevertheless, comic book heroines have an aptitude for turning-on male readers. "I think it's because when an artist is drawing a woman character, they're portraying their ideal image of perfection," says comic book artist J. Scott Campbell. "Lots of times you'll see exaggerations—where men like to see exaggeration—and, of course, there are omissions of any physical flaws."

Campbell's most popular creation—in collaboration with Brandon Choi and Jim Lee—is Caitlin Fairchild, the central superheroine in Image's *Gen 13* comic book series. "Caitlin has become the standout character in the story," says Campbell. "She's this nerdy college girl, with no sexual personality, who's trapped in the body of this incredibly sexy and interesting red-headed goddess. So it's no surprise to me that she has an almost hypnotic effect over the readers."

According to Campbell, Jim Lee's original vision of Fairchild was rendered into "this very thin, very tall woman holding a great weight over her head." Fairchild's height has been subsequently stretched to over six feet. Unlike the initial concept, her physique is more muscular and her chest is decidedly more bosomy.

Deviating from provincial values of comic book past, *Gen 13*'s liaisons include a lesbian bond between characters Rainmaker and Fairchild. "We could have done more with that," explains Campbell. "However, some of the people at the company were uncomfortable with it. We were on the cutting edge, pushing the envelope." He hopes the comic's current creative team will get the opportunity to explore the relationship.

Regarding the GEN 13 animated movie, Campbell is "generally satisfied" with the project's development. Initially, he was involved with preliminary character sketches but the filmmakers took liberties and added details of their own.



A curvy Caitlin Fairchild is served. The *Gen 13* heroine has blossomed "from this nerdy college girl with no sexual personality. She has a hypnotic effect over readers."

Campbell's definition of a superhero? "Take a character who starts out from humble beginnings, and then place the weight of the world on his or her shoulders. They have to deal with it and come through it victorious." Campbell's genesis of a protagonist is borne from "searching for someone the audience can connect with. It has to be someone we can root for while they're fighting the bad guys. Fairchild has all those elements. She's warm and affectionate. You can picture real people who are like that."

Unlike their precursors, the heroes conceptualized for Campbell's latest comic book, *Danger Girl*, are vulnerable: "I consider it a nostalgic look at international spies. It's inspired by images that I remember from TV shows and movies from the '60's. Usually, spy stories bore me. But this is about an all-girl espionage spy team that's code-named Danger Girl. It's a blend of the spy genre with action-adventure, like Johnny Quest or Indiana Jones. Lots of globetrotting, lots of boat and car chases."

Core members of the unit are beautiful women in their mid-20s. In the first issue, main character Abbey Chase (homage to Campbell's wife) is recruited into the Danger Girl organization as a "rookie," but plays by her own rules.

The legion survives by honing the specialized talent—ranging from the occult to knife-throwing—of each femme fatale. (Campbell admits he was "inspired" by Quentin Tarantino's allusion to "Fox Force Five" in PULP FICTION). Then there's the addition of a 16-year-old "child prodigy" who's a computer genius.

A couple more more holdovers from the '60s include the obligatory, older male-in-charge and a competing male agent whom Chase must grudgingly work with.

Now that the Cold War is over, how can a writer generate a decent espionage yarn without nailing the KGB as the bad guys? "I'm creating a fictional threat, somewhat akin to G.I. Joe's Cobra," replies Campbell. "It will have a Nazi, fascist look with bits of Communism and Fascism thrown in the pot. Maybe, I'll create a fictional country. Even in its waning years, it became non-PC to use the Soviets as villains. So now I won't have to constantly monitor world events and keep reshaping my villains. I'll have complete control of my bad guys; they'll run a full gamut from terrorists to mad scientists to super strength soldiers."

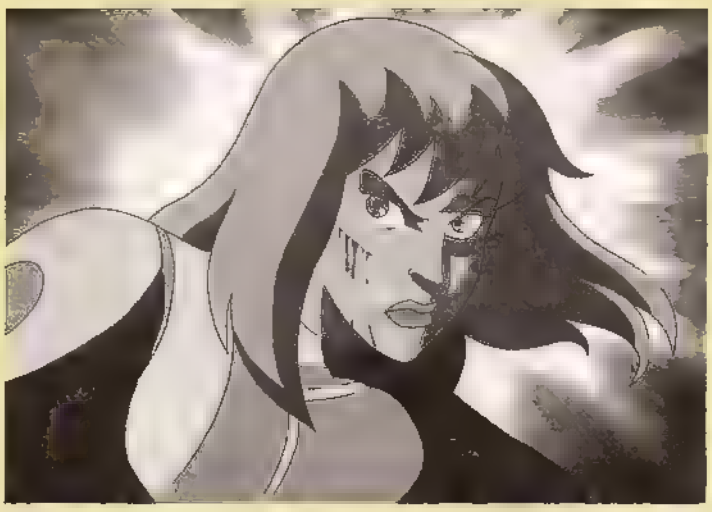
Summarizing his work, Campbell acknowledges that "Females are all the rage in comics. *Gen 13* was going against the norm to have more female characters on the team than males [a ratio of 3:1]. That was extremely unconventional four years ago. But now that concept is pretty much widespread and accepted." □

COMIC'S SULTRY SUPERVIXENS

THEY'RE BAD, BOSOMY, HOT AND HOMICIDAL: DO ANTI-HEROINES WIELD A NEGATIVE INFLUENCE AMONG THEIR MALE READERS?

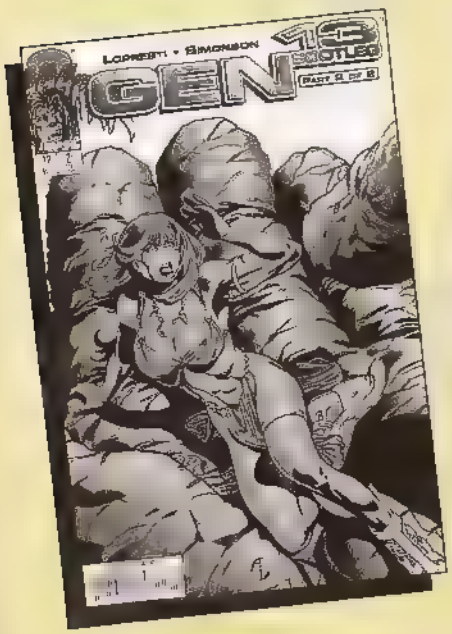
BY DAVID EVANS

Addressing the "bad girl" prototypes that prevail in comic books, Trina Robbins proclaims, "Today, there's a hostile, vicious sexism. Women are enormously exaggerated with giant breasts. They're almost always stark naked, covered in gore and blood and they kill. [Women] are objectified. We're not seen as human beings but like pieces of meat." Make no mistake about it, Robbins—author of *The Great Women Super Heroes* (Kitchen Sink Press)—is pissed.



GEN 13: THE MOVIE is directed by Kevin Altieri. Caitlin Fairchild (*r*) is voiced by actress Alicia Witt (*FF* 7:7), whose credits include URBAN LEGEND and DUNE.

Notes one critic, "The main draw of *Gen13* is its laid-back attitude. It's not one of those vengeful, dark, kill-anything-that-moves comic books."



But before we can get to the core of this matter, we've got to ask ourselves, *What is the comic book medium's interpretation of a "bad girl?"* That phylum is routinely applied to comic book characters who—(A.) embody physical perfection. We're talking impossibly longs legs, almost non-existent waistlines, flawlessly coiffured hairstyles, anime-influenced oval eyes and—of course—heaving breasts rendered into the size of mutant ostrich eggs; (B.) are barely attired in abbreviated trademark costumes. One preference is a body-hugging, bulletproof ensemble that's inevitably ripped to shreds. Optional "coming-out" contrivance: the outfit is peeled-off to reveal an extra layer of harem girl or exotic dancer togs; (C.) are imperiled in fetishistic (sadomasochistic) situations. Typical scenarios stress bondage and/or baptism in blood, replete with "pulp fiction" vignettes (strapped down to tables or gurneys, *les femmes* are probed by perverse doctors. Then there's the mating season ritual: the women are tongue lathered by man/ monster hybrids); (D.) wreak revenge on every male villain in sight. But put away the gun, sister. Let's opt for evisceration, disembowelment and, that time-honored praxis, castration.

But not all "bad girls" are psychotic strippers. There's the virtuous Fairchild of *Gen13* (Image), whose übermodel anatomy wields a spellbinding power over her loyal readers. Or the diabolical *Lady Death* (Chaos Comics). Clad in skull-ornamental, thong bikini, the Lady's voluminous mammaries are signposts to Hell. She's a Mephistophelean embodiment of Russ Meyer hedonism.

But what's this phenomenon all about? And why do these "bad girls" drive young and post-adolescent males into a buying frenzy? Though profits for the comic book industry have been rapidly dwindling, "bad girl" titles immutably stick to each week's Top 100 sales charts.

"I think you'd have to search far and wide to find a female that didn't hold a sexual power over the majority of comic book-buying males," says Devin Graysen, storywriter for *Catwoman* (DC). "For those with a re-



Julie Newmar (FF 7:10) as Catwoman. Devin Grayson, storywriter for the feline felon's comic book, notes, "You'd have to search very far and wide to find a female that *didn't* hold a sexual power over the majority of comic book-buying males."

"It's a lame excuse to say that readers know the difference and can keep a perspective. Bad girl comics are comparable to rape, both involving women as objects."

lentlessly dominant nature, [bad girls] set up a powerful challenge: *'Can this ball-buster be tamed? Can I exert my will over hers? And if I could—oh man, what a stud I would be then!'*

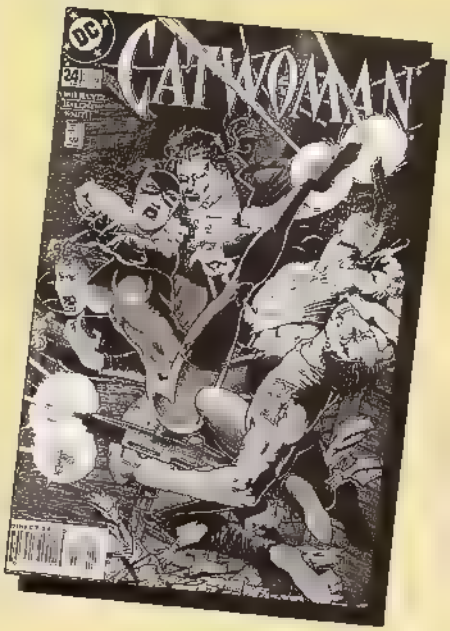
"Yet for those more inclined towards submissiveness, or those temporarily weary of being at the top of the power matrix, the bad girl fantasy is about *being* dominated. It's about giving up your self-control to someone who is obviously competent enough to use it well and with style...and, one would imagine, to mutual satisfaction. You can trust a bad girl as far as all of that goes. You can put your power in her hands for a little while and just relax while she runs the show. What I like about the bad girl mythos is that it's rooted in an acknowledgment of competency to some degree: that much of it, at least, is liberating."

Terry Moore, creator of *Strangers in Paradise*—a continuing story that chronicles the loves and lives of two lesbians—perceives a symbiotic but subversive rapport between illustrated bad girls and male readers: "Teenage boys discover the opposite sex in two ways. It's either through halting and often painful personal experience, or through sexual fantasy fed by media imagery. Comics have always capitalized on this pubescent interest. The women in bad girl comics are like anatomical Frankensteins because there is an undeniable desire in many males to observe such a creature and hope against hope that her clothes might fall off. In the safety of his room, a young male can indulge in these fantasies through a bad girl comic, or a girlie magazine, without fear of retaliation from the woman in question. The bad girl isn't going to tell the reader that he's a geek. And the pinup girl isn't going to stop the reader from embarrassing himself. At the core of it all, it's a really sad and sordid relationship that cheapens, rather than strengthens, the men and the women involved."

Sarah Dyer, editor of *Action Girl* (the "pro-girl yet boy-friendly" comic book), develops central female characters for stories that are predominantly written and illustrated by women. "Bad girl comics," says Dyer, "might be a substitute for readers still too young to buy real porn. Maybe it's because there isn't much adult-oriented material outside of comics that involves superheroes and science fiction." Dyer is also quick to point out "the only comic books that I'd consider to be in the [bad girl] category are the ones that are nearly adult in content, and are obviously produced in order to showcase the female character's attributes. There are plenty of books that have women in small costumes which I don't think should be considered bad girl books."

Indeed, Dyer recounts that she's "seen many well-

The comic book's storywriter, Devin Grayson, says "Catwoman is the fantasy in all of us. We let her do all these dark deeds that we suppress."



"Big breasts do not automatically equal a small IQ. In that sense, I'm pleased that Catwoman takes down one of the more harmful and prevalent sexist myths."

meaning books with female characters that are not prurient." Though bereft of gratuitous violence or sexuality, the comic books are generically and invalidly branded as "bad girl" entertainment.

In the aftermath of our nation's school shootings, President Clinton has blamed video game commerce—and the entire media—as the prime motivator for violence. (In retrospect, wasn't the bombing of Yugoslavia nothing more than a gruesome replication of *Wing Commander*?—the significant difference, of course, is that NATO killed *real* civilians. And how many points-off for bombing the Chinese Embassy?) Some of the heat is incrementally dribbling down to comic books. Bottom line: is there any foundation to the theory that bad girls sustain misogyny? Are they a negative influence? "On the one hand," says Dyer, "material like that tends to create a climate in which women do not feel welcome. Shops that are very oriented towards that kind of material, or conventions that are heavily-packed with nearly naked models, certainly don't encourage women or families to take an interest in comics.

"I think [bad girl comics] would be more harmful to younger guys who read them. Even when I was in my early teens, I would never have looked at drawings like those and thought I was supposed to look like that for a second."

Terry Moore insists that females consequentially suffer the residual damage: "Women have to deal with these readers [of 'bad girl' comics] in real life, every day. Women have to struggle with misconceptions and ignorance. They must also share in the bitterness and disillusionment when men bring unrealistic, boyhood fantasies into their relationships. Bad girl imagery is a distortion many times removed from something that is, in reality, very beautiful. It is a lame excuse to say that readers know the difference and can keep a perspective. Bad girl comics are comparable to rape, both involving women as objects."

However, in defense of the medium's voluptuous vixens, Devin Grayson notes, "I think it's clear that they play into fantasy. Men in comics are a damn good looking set, too—as are supermodels and many movie stars. As a culture, we absolutely do equate beauty with likability, often even past the point of what could be considered strictly realistic or attainable. It's everywhere. Barbie, for example, scares me more than Seline [Catwoman].

"And big breasts do not automatically equal a small IQ. In that sense, I'm pleased that [Catwoman] takes down one of the more harmful and prevalent sexist myths. And though you could make the argument that [Catwoman] plays into other [sexist pigeonholing]...well, look, if it takes her being phenomenally sexy to get people to come check out the book, they won't be able to leave without noticing she's brave and smart and strong and cool as well."

Another aspect of bad girl comics, which similarly provokes controversy, is the use or abuse of homosexuality as a plot device. Sample *Gen13*: the (apparently sapphic) Rainmaker discreetly experiences a sexual attraction to Fairchild, who's oblivious to her friend's alternate lifestyle. "In popular media," explains Dyer, "a character is only gay or lesbian so their sexuality can be focused upon—especially the portrayals of lesbian characters lusting after their straight friends, and often 'converting' them. That strikes me as a combined male fantasy and nightmare. I think these portrayals can be harmful as it makes it seem as though homosexuals are 'more' sexual beings than heterosexuals. Following that is the stereotype that gays and lesbians are ultra-promiscuous. It's not really homosexuality but a myth and a fantasy of homosexuality."

Finally, what can young male readers learn about women from comic books? Are there any valuable lessons to be learned? "I would hope," shares Dyer, "that a book like *Action Girl* or *Skeleton Key* or *Love & Rockets*, with their realistic portrayals of young women, could offer some sense of what women really think about and really behave like. I'd also hope that women would get a sense of empowerment."

"[Catwoman's] an archetype," says Grayson, "and while there's tremendous power it that, there's also inherent limitations as well. For example, she's not great with human intimacy. She's not what we could call 'well-rounded' as a human being. But here's the



Julie Newmar recounts the archetypal Catwoman, nemesis of BATMAN, as "a role so spontaneous and creative and maddening and so sexy and insouciant."

"I like to moon tan on Blood Beach," Lady Death told *FF*. "And take blood bubble baths. And seduce and kill on a grand scale. Y'know, girl stuff."





Michelle Pfeiffer told FF, "BATMAN RETURNS (t&b) is about a woman discovering her empowerment. I do see Catwoman as a positive role model for women."

thing: every woman—in fact, everyone—needs access to a little bit of Catwoman in their soul. There are situations when being able to tap into that kind of dark power, being able to put on that role like a mask, is terrifically empowering and effective.

"The gift of the book, I think, is watching her live out that fantasy that's in all of us; letting her do all the dark deeds we sometimes rationally suppress. There are times as a modern woman when you have to be a Wonder Woman or a Supergirl to get through the day. But, believe me, there are Catwoman times, too. They're usually at night."

Terry Moore wraps up the forum with her own summarization: "I'm certainly no expert on women. I don't believe anybody is. I don't claim to understand women. I don't think any man can. Women astound me. They amaze me. They terrify me. They bring me no end of joy and grief. I'm not a writer attempting to explain these things, I only hope to capture a moment and show it to the world, and allow people to share it and find the find the good and the bad for themselves." □





LONDON NIGHT SUPERHEROINES

CLEAVAGE & CARNAGE. THEY COOKED IN COMICS: NOW THOSE BAD, BAD GIRLS ARE BUSTING OUT IN LIVE-ACTION MEDIUMS.

BY DAVID EVANS

London Night Studios was fueled by "bad girl" comic books. Literally bustin' out of their dental-floss threads, Razor, Embrace, Lethal Stryke, Poizon and Tommi Gunn cooled their bad ass 'tudes in urban bloodbaths. "We started pioneering this concept—the dark side of heroines—back in 1996," explains company president Everette Hartsoe. "We allied ourselves with Ministry of Film, an L.A. company that produced EMBRACE OF THE VAMPIRE—the Alyssa Milano movie that sold something like 40,000 units—and the EROTIC CONFESSIONS television series. Ministry had connections to models and actresses. We thought it would be a good idea to take a starlet and create a comic book character around her. Carmen Electra was our first big name; we tailored the Embrace comic book character for her." (*Electra recounts, "The character came from an elite family of vampires. She thirsted for love and took on the bad guys. It's how she survived."*)





"*Poizon* [I] was among our first comic books," says London Night prez Everette Hartsoe. "Gloria-Anne Gilbert [*top*] posed as Poizon for our front covers."

London Night Studios, recalls Hartsoe, "subsequently started bringing in models and creating characters for them. Tommy Gunn started with J.J. North [3:3], a blistering blonde who played the title role in ATTACK OF THE 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD. Later, the role was passed on to *FF* cover woman Heather Elizabeth Parkhurst [5:10], who was starring in SHERMAN OAKS."

Earlier this year, London Night Studios expanded their venue. "We're now London Night Entertainment," says Kevin Summerfield, CEO of the company's feature film/TV franchises. "The comic book industry has been shifting away from commercial success. Our job is to re-



Chrissy Mountjoy has been groomed as London Nights' prime player. Her likeness is visible in the company's Safari Sisters comic book. "We've also cast Chrissy in PHASMEROTICA, our TV pilot," says London Night's Kevin Summerfield. She's a Starship Trouper."

define the industry and reach today's audiences. Last January, we signed an official partnership that launched a film division. Producer Jeff Most, who wrapped THE CROW: SALVATION earlier this year, is optioning Razor, our flagship character.

"We're creating live action comic book projects based on previous and new material. It's a new approach to an established medium. *Reading* comic books is no longer cool. Today's audiences are far more advanced, even at the youngest marketable level. But *watching* comic books, now that's something we can all enjoy."

"We already had an established audience through London Night Studios," inserts Hartsoe, "so making the transition to live action is something everyone wanted. Including us. Summerfield already cut his teeth on CARMILLA, a troubled low-budget production about a lesbian vampire, and we took that experience to the next level."

London Night's summer slate includes PHASMEROTICA, which Summerfield describes as "an anthology series that's a blend between THE TWILIGHT ZONE and RED SHOE DIARIES." Conversely, the company is shoot-

"Poizon [b], among our company's comic book icons, has been embodied by Gloria-Anne Gilbert [f]," says London Night CEO Kevin Summerfield. "She'll appear in our videos."



"*Reading* comic books is no longer cool. Today's audiences are far more advanced, even at the youngest, marketable level. *Watching* comic books is the option."

ing CREEPY HOLLOW, "a horror film for the family" that will debut at retail stores in November. In another office, actresses are auditioning for LE VAMPIRE CARMILLA, a six-episode miniseries that, notes Hartsoe, "merges LA FEMME NIKITA with THE LOST BOYS."

"We haven't abandoned comic books," says Summerfield. "We just don't want to pump-out derivative bullshit. As a tie-in to LE VAMPIRE CARMILLA, we acquired the rights to a Spanish comic book that's an adaptation of *Carmilla*, the Sheridan Le Fanu novella that I adapted for my movie and the miniseries. The comic book initially adheres to Le Fanu's work, but, in subsequent issues, goes way beyond the novella.

"We're also working on a comic book that will plug into LUCINDA'S SPELL, the Jon Jacobs movie that debuts in October. That film rocks, man. It's everything that PRACTICAL MAGIC should have been. Jacobs is the genre director for the new millennium. Check out his GIRL WITH THE HUNGRY EYES, a cerebral, sexy, unnerving exploration of a female vampire. It was too good for Columbia Pictures, which sunk it in a generic, illusory 'erotic thriller' campaign."

"We also wanted to tie-in a comic book with THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT because that would have been a challenge. But I understand someone else bought the rights—"

Hartsoe rhapsodizes about one of the actresses he had just auditioned. "Summerfield, she's like a 20-year-old Nastassja Kinski and her range is amazing. She should cross over to CREEPY HOLLOW. Give her reading on video."

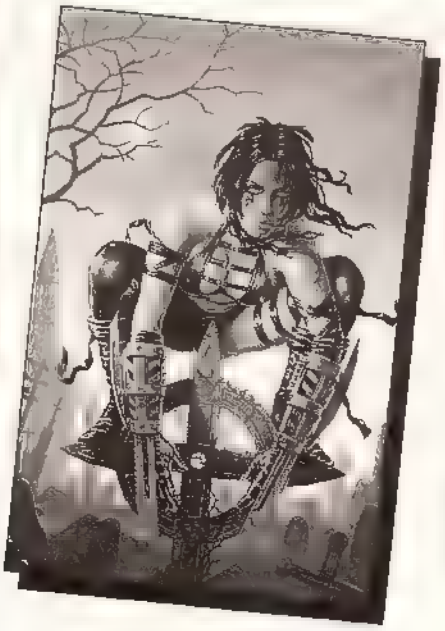




"*Razor Uncut* #28 [*b*], as well as Dorian's rendering of the heroine [r], confirms why we cast Vanesa Tayor [t] as Razor in the flesh," says Summerfield. "Vanesa can register Razor's beauty and rage. Ironically, Vanesa earned cult idolatry in Surrender's fiery FEMALIEN franchise, where she chilled-out as a sex kitten."

As Summerfield whisks into the adjacent room, Hartsoe dials the regional casting office. "We're reviewing new talent on a monthly basis," he tells me. "It's important for any actress who is interested in working with us to understand what level we are at. Too often, we have actresses who want to be stars overnight and they forget the purpose of the industry, which is to tell entertaining stories under the best possible circumstances. Our budgets may be small, but our aggressive marketing strategies loom large. To be succinct, we can provide much more than the average independent production company. As long as the talent is willing to play by our company standards, we will support them as if they are already a star."

The phone rings. Somebody from Florida wants to talk to Summerfield, who picks-up the conversation: "Our job as story tellers is our primary focus, whether it be in the action market, family market or the erotic market. We need talent to understand these markets before the cameras roll. Attitude and personality is the first thing we look at before we even evaluate their abilities. If you are willing to work with us, then we'll make the accom-

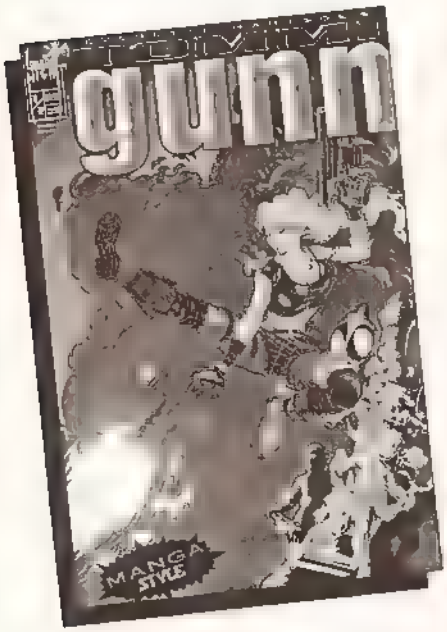


modations suitable to work with you. Plain and simple."

Okay, but what about London Night's founders? Razor, Tommi Gunn, Poizon—have they been put out to pasture?

"Absolutely not," says Summerfield. "We're sticking with the formula of bad girls, which has been a staple of London Night's comic division. We're just gonna do it more in the live action vein. The audience is there. Our job is to provide the product that they want."

But the reformation process includes a company standard: "take a starlet and create a comic book around her." This year's ensemble includes Roxy Leroux. "She's *Penthouse*'s tallest centerfold," says Hartsoe. "Roxy's people are pretty intense about cracking Julie Strain's foundation. She has this *femme fatale* persona that reminds me of Glenn Close's 'Cruella de Ville' in Disney's 101 DALMATIONS...only our product won't be Disney [*laughs*]. Starlets from cheap-o companies like Troma have tried to defect to our camp. But we're not a sanctuary."



Another homegrown bombshell is Chrissy Mountjoy. "I cast her in a direct-to-video film called CHRISSY'S ADDICTION," says Hartsoe. "She plays a vampire and she pulls it off with unrestrained luster. Chrissy is also in *Dreamwitch*, the pilot episode of PHASMEROTICA.



"*Tommi Gunn* [l&b], another one of London Night's bad girls, was portrayed by Heather Elizabeth Parkhurst [t] on our comic covers," says Hartsoe. "A regular on the TV sitcom SHERMAN OAKS, Heather was sexy and funny. But if Tommi Gunn were adapted into a movie, I'd love to see Heather Graham play the role."



"Though making a transition to film, we aren't abandoning comics. We're dong a LUCINDA'S SPELL tie-in and have 'Sheena meets Charlie's Angels' on the boards."

"There's no denying the fact that Chrissy is gorgeous," adds Summerfield. "But we're going out on a limb for her because she's trouble-free and totally professional. That's why you'll see a ton of merchandising on Chrissy, including trading cards, comic covers and recurrent appearances in our film and TV projects. This girl deserves our attention and we want to support her."

Perusing one of the drawing boards, my glance locks on an etching that is antithetically bad girl; the face evokes Disney's wide-eyed, virtuous Jasmine. The body belongs to actress Jennifer Connelly, the physical influence for Jasmine (though Connelly's anatomical endowments were substantively scaled-back for her cartoon incarnation). Unlike the other femmes in London Night's rogues gallery, this unarmed heroine—clad in threadbare bikini—paradoxically appears both happy and vulnerable. "She's one of the *Safari Sisters*," explains Hartsoe. "It's a comic book due for a Fall debut. It's much lighter, in tone, than our past illustrated work. It's sort of 'Sheena meets Charlie's Angels.'

"We had printed a modern *Sheena* comic book, but I did an early termination on the licensing deal. *The Safari Sisters* spoofs Sheena and, unlike our bad girls, is played very tongue-in-cheek."

Why is this whole "jungle girl" trend making a comeback?

"It strikes a fetishistic chord," replies Hartsoe. "The image of a girl in a white



Top: Julie Smith debuted London Night's "Virtual Vixen" on Cinemax's EROTIC CONFESSIONS ("If I can be naked in front of God, I can be naked in front of anybody," says Smith). *R*: Smith allied with Carmen Electra, who was cast as Embrace ("She's a go-go dancer by day, a vampire by night," recalls Electra).

bikini, brandishing a spear gun or pistol, crosses over to both sexes. The 'jungle girl,' is equally popular. She's perceived as voluptuous, tan, and often blonde. She's clad in a leopard-skin bikini that's peeled-off when she's tossed in a cannibal pot with sliced vegetables. We're also playing it light, *a la* Little Annie Fanny; we'll amplify that genre's fetishism, and thumb our nose at political correction."

London Night Entertainment is also abuzz with *Erox*, which Hartsoe describes as "a very sexy magazine that will showcase our company's starlets. Call it spontaneous media coverage. As soon as a model or actress joins our fold, we photograph her for a magazine profile and trading cards. We want to develop our own star system, and nourish cult celebrity for the women attached to London Night."

An employee uncrates boxes of trading cards. "They're tied-into a movie called GAME OF PLEASURE," says Hartsoe. "Summerfield made it a few years ago. It's a pre-Surrender type of film—softcore sci-fi. We're currently printing a set of LE VAMPIRE CARMILLA trading cards."

"The profits from our sexier franchises are pumped into our family trade and more mainstream fantasy and sci-fi movies," says Summerfield. "You know what I admired about THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT? Its anti-Hollywood message. It completely blew-off any credibility in regard to that 'bigger is better' crap. You don't need a zillion bucks, you need a concept, talent and discipline. That's what our North Carolina film colony is about. We're literally keeping a long distance from Hollywood." □



CHRISTA CAMPBELL
LONDON NIGHT'S AURORA, S.A.G.E

BETTIE PAGE, COMIC BOOKS & CRACKING THE BOYS' CLUB.

BY DAVID EVANS



"My heroes in life are always changing," says Christa Campbell, "because I never wanted to be someone else or become their identical clone. Rather, I like to take bits and pieces of other people and use them to keep on becoming the person I want to be." The 25-year-old actress is modeling for *The S.A.G.E. Project*, a comic book marketed by London Night Entertainment, purveyors of illustrated femmes fatales like *Razor*, *Poison* and *Embrace*. "S.A.G.E. translates into Secret Agent Genetically Engineered," says Campbell. "My character, who's endowed with psi-powers, is named Aurora. The premise may remind you of LA FEMME NIKITA."

Everette Hartsoe, London Night president, selected Campbell from hundreds of competitive models to be the template for Aurora. He subsequently infused the comic heroine with Campbell's physical likeness and personality.

"Not unlike Aurora, I'm a strong person," insists Campbell. "For me, strong means smart and knowing what I want...and being one step ahead. And if men get threatened by that, well that's their problem. But men still have the power, especially in Hollywood. Hopefully, with all the new independent films coming out with women who are writers, maybe that will start to change. I would eventually love to put my own production company together. I love working with women who are top agents in the business. I love it when I walk into a room and the head producer is a woman. It blows me away."

Two years ago, Hartsoe hired Carmen Electra, who was on the cusp of her MTV celebrity, to embody Embrace, London Night's vampire. Campbell is confident her own link with an alluring, assertive comic book heroine will prompt similar prosperity: "I think the Aurora art is great. Shawn Fernek, who draws me, is amazing. The illustrations look exactly like me. I'd love to do a film or TV spin-off."

A native of northern California, Campbell launched her career at 17 by entering regional beauty pageants. She was eventually discovered by a talent agent who negotiated a deal for Campbell to pose for calendars, swimsuit spreads and five national posters. For the past three years, she's studied acting at the Howard Fine Studios. Her resume includes guest roles on PACIFIC BLUE, HBO's CONFESSIONS, Nickelodeon's ALL THAT, et al. She also appeared in EMBRACE OF THE VAMPIRE, the film that corroded Alyssa Milano's girl-next-door image.

Campbell's visibility expanded when she was cast in BETTIE PAGE: FROM PINUP TO SEX QUEEN, a documentary produced by the E! Entertainment network. "I went into that project not knowing who Bettie Page was. I had no idea she was this '50s pinup icon who mysteriously vanished. But when they showed me her pictures—*Pow!*—it hit me. I instantly recognized her, even though I didn't know her name. I performed as Bettie in simulated behind-the-scenes stuff." The role also earned the actress a *FF* front cover (6:10/11).



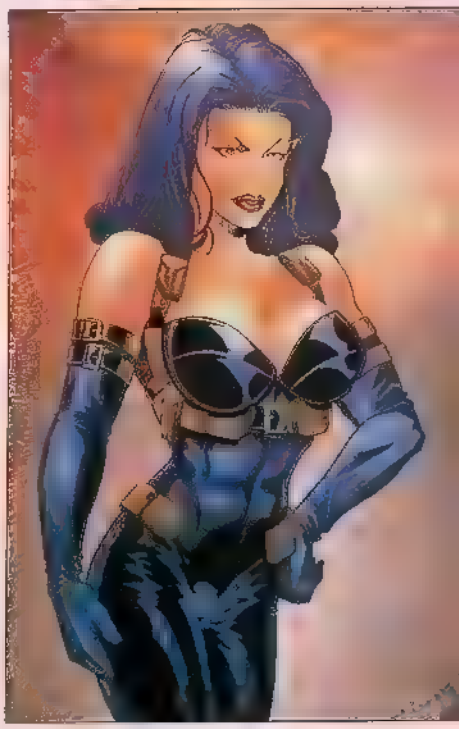
"Men still have the power, especially in Hollywood. But with all of the new independent films coming out with female writers, maybe things will start to change."

Campbell just wrapped her role as a woman-on-the-lam in RED LETTERS, a thriller co-starring Timothy Hutton. Between films, the actress is developing a web site: "I want it to be kind of funky. Maybe I'll go for a retro-Austin Powers design. But really I want to find my own style. I'm always trying to look for the edge."

Perusing art of her alter ego, Campbell sighs, "I like to think that I'm already a superhero in the sense that I'm always trying to breakdown barriers, and lead other women up my path." She pauses and gently laughs.

"Wow!" □

***Facing & left*: Campbell plays the title role in BETTIE PAGE. "I acted out every big change in her life. My pin-up experience came in handy." *Below*: Campbell rendered into Aurora.**



CAROLINE RENEE SMITH
PART TIME SUPERHEROINE

THE ACTRESS REFLECTS ON 3-D, STEREOTYPES & THE DARK SIDE OF KIDDIE TELEVISION.

BY DAVID EVANS

Never mind that it's over 100 degrees: Carolyn Renee Smith is hardly breaking a sweat. She's acclimating herself to pinup technology. "We're shooting holograms," she smiles. "Hot cheesecake in 3-D. My photographer, George Stover, is an archivist of stereoscopic cameras." While slapping mosquitoes, Stover pitches some poses. "When you're doing pictures that are literally 'coming at ya,' there's no point in subtlety," he explains. Unfastening her bikini top, Smith lifts it parallel by the straps between her bosom and the 3-D lens.

"Can you see the nipples, George?"

"No," he says while pressing an eye to the view finder.

"Let's shoot."

Smith is an actress but her prosperity as a model has prompted the development of a franchise and web site. "I'm sometimes hired to impersonate genre icons. Matter of fact, I've posed as Bettie Page for *Femme Fatales* [6:10/11]," she recalls. "But my biggest success was with issue 6:8. Laura Schiff wrote an article on Amanda Conner, who illustrates the *Vampirella* comic book. The *FF* editor wanted me to embody Vampi for 'live' pictures photographed by Duane Polcou. Well, as soon as that issue hit the newsstands, I was flooded with fan mail.

"We had a really tight deadline. Amanda Conner actually completed a Vampirella costume only scant hours before my shoot. She loaned me all the accessories and the quality was terrific. It really fit well.



"My next movie is PRISON PLANET. I've been cast as the militant leader of a female colony. It's an opportunity to play a strong woman who has authority."

Years before, I auditioned as Vampirella for a cool management that was scheduling personal appearances. Though I was photographed for *The New York Post*, the costume was inferior to Amanda's. But my agent covertly leaked to me they had already hired a girl to tour as Vampirella, I was only part of a p.r. blitz. But at least I got to reprise the role with Amanda and Duane. "

Mopping perspiration from her cleavage, Smith drinks warm Pepsi out of the can. "There's enough sweat out here for a melding of Tennessee Williams, ALIEN and bad submarine movies," says the former Coors poster girl. Thunder is audible in the distance.

"Sounds like a mean one coming up," says Stover. "Want to wrap it up?"

A warm breeze pulses through Smith's tresses. "Let's do the 'thong and beach ball' thing," smiles Smith. "It's New Age 3-D. This is all for science. And to pay for my little girl's education."

"People write me and say, 'You're the new Vampirella,'" grins Smith. "I appreciate the compliment but I have a problem with it. Barbara Leigh [4:3] is indelibly Vampirella. She's *breathtakingly* Vampirella, and fans will righteously accept no substitutes. I admit that I tried to get permission to impersonate Vampirella on the road, and appear at conventions. But by the time Vampi's benefactors [Harris Comics] gave me the green light, I had to decline. I was pregnant."

Smith also admits "having a fascination with superheroines. More than once, even when I was a kid in the '70s, people would tell

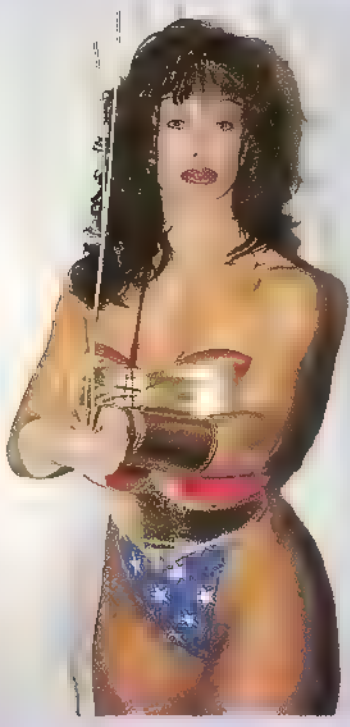


"One of the obligations of the audition was to fit into a form-fitting body suit. Think about it. Isn't it odd that a perfect body is a prerequisite for a kiddie show?"

me that I looked like Wonder Woman. So, naturally, I was a devout fan of that TV series and I was in awe of Lynda Carter, who played the role. Years later, I attended a Halloween party as Wonder Woman, and I can't tell you how many men came up to me and said they fantasized about that heroine. It kind of amazed me that so many men were sexually attracted to her."

As a juvenile, Smith was equally addicted to a children's series called ISIS [1975]. "It was another show about a superheroine. Ironically, the lead was played by JoAnna Cameron, who ignited her career by doing

L: "Because I'm voluptuous & model swimsuits, I've been pigeonholed in bimbo roles. Just once, I'd like to be cast as the brilliant attorney." *B*: "Me as my role model: Wonder Woman."





"Farrah Fawcett and Suzanne Somers used to play the kind of roles that I'm always cast in. But they blew-off the sexpot image and made comebacks as actresses."

racy stuff [e.g. PRETTY MAIDS ALL IN A ROW] and posing for *Playboy*. But JoAnna switched gears and somehow turned into a role model for kids. She even reprised the character on other kiddie shows like SHAZAM! I used to incorporate Isis into my recreation. I'd wear this big medallion around my neck and pretend to be her."

Smith acknowledges that comic books give aficionados the opportunity to fantasize: "I was working a comic book convention, when these grown men I was talking to saw my boyfriend, a male model attired in a Spiderman suit. And suddenly,

L: "An outtake from my 3-D shoot. As a teen, I was impacted by Jacqueline Smith. She looked hot in a bikini and is a great actress." *B*: "Me in THE EVIL WITHIN: a challenging role & no T&A."



they got tremendously excited. They'd ask, *'Can I get his autograph?' 'Will he pose with us for a picture?'* It's like the mere thought of these comic book characters would make them revert to their childhood. I don't know if these characters appeal more to men or to children. But regardless, I don't remember saying as a kid, 'Oh, she's so sexually appealing!' What I remember is admiring Isis and Wonder Woman because they kicked butt. They were heroines.

"But, as an adult, I realized there was a dark side to all of this. Not long ago, I auditioned for a FANTASTIC FOUR series. One of the obligations was to fit into a form-fitting bodysuit. Think about it. Isn't it kind of odd that a perfect body is a prerequisite for a children's show? We have to be very cautious about the message we're sending to children."

Smith's real-life role model is Madonna: "I love her. She's strong, and she really paved the way for other women. I respect the way she endured so much criticism from people. Madonna knew who she was, and what she wanted, and wasn't ashamed...

"Madonna taught me that if you make a mistake in life and people are going to criticize you for it, you just stand up to them and intimidate them right back—and they won't bother you anymore."

Though currently a Hollywood resident, Smith is "working bi-coastal. I prefer L.A. over New York. I was in Manhattan for seven months and returning to the west coast was like starting my life over again. But I can't make a living without my financial opportunities in New York, where most of my contacts are. New York is not nearly as competitive as L.A. There's less work in New York but the ratio of those out of work is much less harsh. So, I gotta eat. Gotta make a living. I'll go wherever the work can be found. I really hope to eventually remain in Los Angeles. Or, even better, like Jamaica.

As a college student, Smith launched a modeling career with small-scale jobs during the summer breaks. She later earned roles in direct-to-video movies like EROTIC BOUNDARIES and EXECUTIVE TARGET. Last year, the actress wrapped a plum role in THE EVIL WITHIN for Extreme Pictures. "I play a really mousy character who's obsessed with television. She's a lonely hearts-type of girl with a history of family violence. Later, my character turns out to be a demonic killer. It was great fun, kind of like THE CRUSH, but much more extreme. It's not for my fans who might expect sexy stuff. I wear baggy clothes throughout the whole movie, and really down play my looks. The character does not have any sex appeal. I was excited about that because I'm always cast as the sexy character...not that I don't like that, but this was nice for a change.

"I don't find modeling as challenging anymore, and acting is very challenging. But juicy roles for women are scarce. With all the scripts out there, I think the ratio is one substantive female role to 15 major male roles. It's a major bummer. When female roles are accessible, they're usually reserved for adolescents: 18-year-olds who can pass for younger."

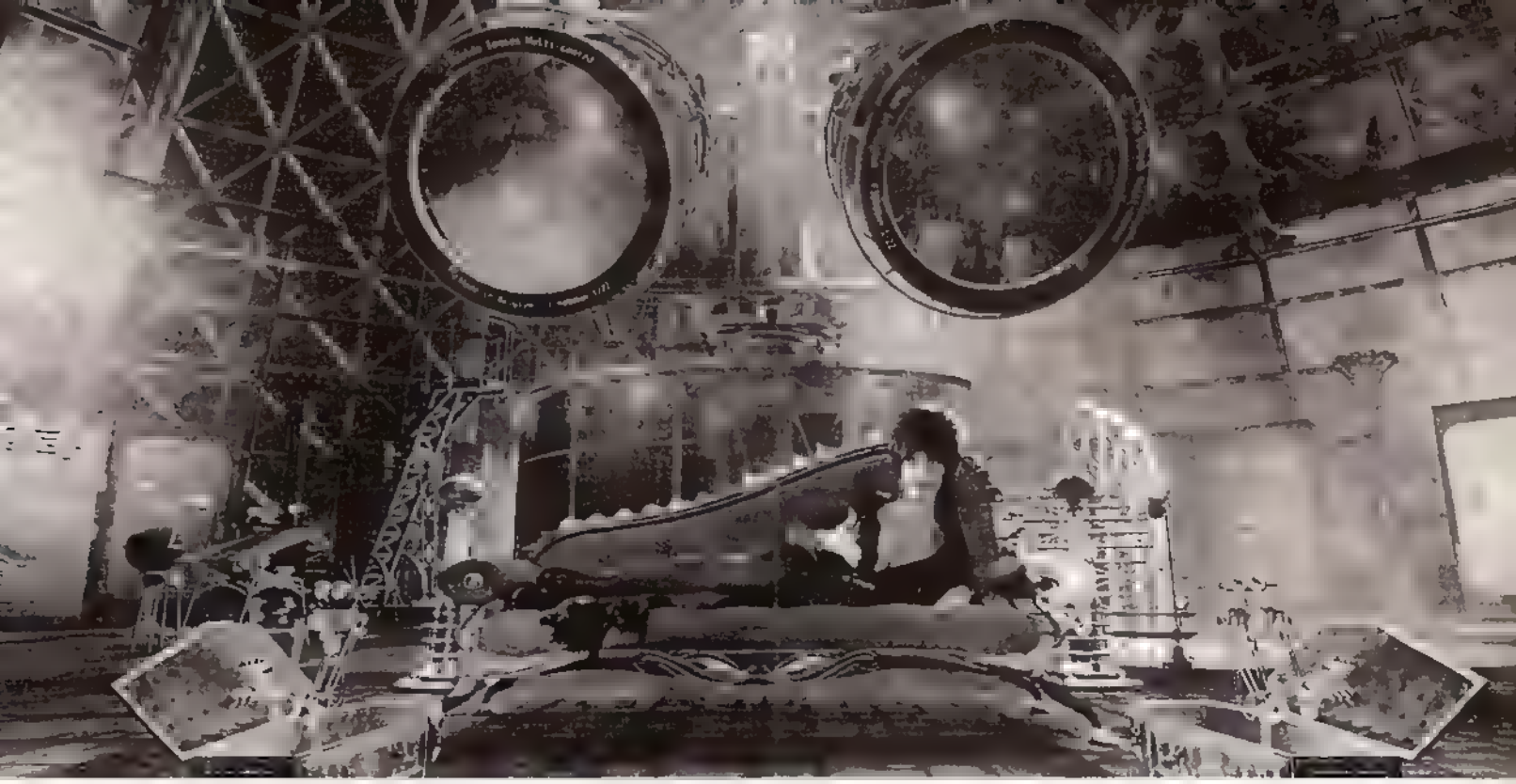
The 30-year-old Smith professes an admiration for Farrah Fawcett and Suzanne Somers. "They used to play the kind of roles that I'm often cast in. But they blew-off the whole 'sex kitten' image and made a comeback as serious actresses. Now that's the kind of 3-D I'd like to embrace: female characters with three dimensions."

Her primary goal is "to audition for director Tom Shadyack," whose track record includes THE NUTTY PROFESSOR remake. "He's just so brilliant. Tom is one of my ex-boyfriend's best friends, and I know how he struggled. He is my inspiration. "

Between film assignments, Smith continues to model: "When striking poses, I used to really turn-on the sexual facade to the point of overkill. But it was my acting coach who said, 'Even when in front of a still camera, be yourself. Always be yourself.' Now that's really good advice." □



"Me posing as Bettie Page, a woman I'd like to explore. I do nudity in movies to pay the bills. But I think it's sexier when you show less, maybe just the faces in a love scene."



Elvira in her Imax 3-D attraction, ENCOUNTER IN THE 3RD DIMENSION: the "Madonna of the Macabre" warbles a show-stopper called *Haunted House*. The annual *FF* cover woman is also hosting a one-hour "Halloween '98 network special" for Dick Clark Productions. Check out Laura Schiff's review (below) of El's wavy web.

FATALE ATTRACTIONS

continued from page 7

graphed fight sequence twice—just in case you were snoozing the first time around. Then, in the last 15 minutes of the film, for no rational reason whatsoever, the shrink (Robert Donavan) suddenly turns psycho, kidnaps O'Brien and the wife of her last victim (Landon Hall) and then kills Hall's brother—all in the name of therapy. You call this filmmaking? Writer/director Gary Graver should be ashamed of himself. Just about the only reason to watch this is actress Alexander Keith (6:7), billed here as Wendy Schumacher. The kick-boxing blonde makes a totally gratuitous cameo as a beefy prison inmate who beats the crap out of her new roomie. I hear we can look forward to ESCORT 3, due out soon. Early word is that it merely rehashes the same tired footage from ESCORT 1. Would you guys give it a rest already?

●Heard a rumor that the much-anticipated British vampire film, RAZOR BLADE SMILE, will be distributed by A-Pix Entertainment in the U.S. under an optional title, PURE VAMP. Eileen Daly (PERVIRELLA, WITCHCRAFT X) plays an undead assassin who's hired to knock off elite businessmen. The film, written and directed by Jake West, was nominated for Best Achievement in Production at the 1998 British Independent Film Awards. Reviews have been mixed, the general consensus being that RBS is totally cheesy—and one of the best British vampire films ever made. So why the title change? Why not capitalize on all the hype that already surrounds this cult film? A-Pix's senior vp of marketing, Steven DeMille, did not return repeated phone calls. In fact, no one at A-Pix would even confirm if this rumor is true. RBS' American debut was scheduled for October '98. But it's almost a year later and we're still waiting. Meanwhile, tap into ***www.razorbladesmile.com*** (At press time, A-Pix's Larisa Gutmanis called to relate that the British import will be released domestically as RAZOR BLADE SMILE ["That U.K. title was initially gauged as too offensive"]. The generic alternative title, PURE VAMP, has been trashed).

●Caught up with Chicago actress Tish Hicks while making the party rounds of bohemian Los Feliz, CA. Hicks' voice is pivotal to STARSHIP TROOPERS: BUG WARS, an animated spin-off of the 1997 Paul Verhoeven film about a futuristic, fascist military that battles giant, aliens bugs in an intergalactic fight for survival. Hicks incarnates "Carmen Ibanez," the character played by Denise Richards: "The saucier, Verhoeven, tongue-in-cheek shower scene stuff was translated for a demographic that's mostly young boys. In the film, Carmen is already Rico's girlfriend, but, in the beginning episodes of the cartoon, they really don't know each other yet. It's only recently, in an episode called *Starship Smoochers*, that we finally kiss. Things are really picking up now. I have more action stuff to do now and the relationship between Carmen and Rico is really being developed. Despite not having much to do in the beginning episodes, Carmen is really becoming a huge presence in the show."

Tish Hicks is heir to the Denise Richards' role in the animated series, STARSHIP TROOPERS: BUG WARS. "My character, Carmen, is now a huge presence in the show."



According to Hicks, "The animation is so amazing, like nothing anyone has ever seen. All of the spaceships and landscapes are being done by the people who did BABYLON 5—it's that sophisticated. And the characters are being done with 'motion capture,' so they have actors doing the motion and the facial expressions. The look is similar to A BUG'S LIFE but it's more lifelike. Even the alien bugs in TROOPERS are the same quality as in the original movie. I think this show is going to be really huge."

●And in the "heads are gonna roll" category, it seems that a rewrite I submitted to our editorial department never made it to press—arrrghh. In "Best Addressed" (*FF* 8:1), my review of Elvira's web site was *supposed* to read as follows: The Official Elvira Web Site (www.elvira.com) is bursting with witchy wonders and chuckles galore. Elvira had this to say of the tattoos, posters, and auto paintings dedicated to Her Darkness: "People love to put me all over their bodies, hang me from their bedroom walls, and lay me on the hoods of their cars, (uh... you know what I mean)." There's loads to look at here: Elvira's Horrorscope, makeup tips, photos, merchandise, sound clips, appearances and more. Score: 3 stars.

●Rachel Robbins and Roxanne Michaels, both profiled in FF 7:13, have reunited for JACK TRICKSTER. Directed by Herb Wood, the film—notes Robbins—"is about a serial killer who is mimicking Jack the Ripper. I play this combination red herring/prostitute who's trying to exile herself from the business." Again collaborating with Wood on FANTASY FOR HIRE, Robbins will wear triple hats: co-writer, co-producer, leading lady! □

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LETTERS

"STAR WARS" SIRENS (8:1)

Got the new *FF* ish and was pleasantly surprised to see Maria de Aragon. Actually—before being cast as STAR WARS' Greedo—Maria was one of the sexiest babes to haunt B-films back in my old drive-in days. But there was no mention, in her interview, of Maria's exploits in films like THE CREMATORS, BLOOD MANIA (lotsa nudity in that one) and, my favorite, WONDER WOMEN, with Ross Hagen—I even have a topless 8x10 from that one!

Fred Olen Ray
OLENRAY@aol.com

About the STARS WARS trilogy: the image that indelibly sticks in my mind is feisty Carrie Fisher clad in the harem bikini and veils. It contrasted so well with her personality. Even more memorable than this year's PHANTOM MENACE is Laura Schiff's interview with Ms. Fisher. I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall when George Lucas and Fisher "vocalized" their differences (via the profane talking boxes) while tinkering with the INDIANA JONES TV script. Thanks, Ms. Schiff, for a very candid and funny interview. Carrie Fisher is even more intriguing than her sci-fi legacy. Many thanks to Alan Jones & Mike Childs for the nostalgic slant on Fisher. Her Jodie Foster (Leia) /Robby Benson (Luke) story was worth the price of the magazine.

Ben Selke
Tallahassee, Florida

Carrie Fisher rocks! Laura Schiff's updated (1999) interview was a horn-of-plenty: behind-the-scenes STAR WARS gossip and Carrie's post-1983 life as a screenwriter (& courageously talking about the drug problem precipitated by her SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE appearance). Congrats to Mike Childs and Alan Jones for Carrie's flashback to the first STAR WARS when, evidently, she was already sharpening her wit.

Kevin Grey
Citrus Heights, CA

With all the media hype focused squarely on everything and everyone having to do even remotely with PHANTOM MENACE, it was nice that you decided to turn your attention to Carrie Fisher ("Princess Leia"). The cover was beautifully illustrated and the article was most interesting! Indeed, it's one of the finest articles I've ever read in *FF*. My compliments to all who had a hand in it.

Also very much enjoyed "Best Addressed," Laura Schiff's website directory. I hope you will update it from time to time.

Craig Reid's interview with Francois Yip (BLACK MAGIC)? Let's just say she's one of the most exotic actresses you've ever featured.

Stephen Lee Roldan
Aiea, HI

Two words for Carrie Fisher's Princess Leia: role model. Last year, in time for Christmas , I bought all three of my sisters the 1998 Hallmark tree ornaments of Leia. Enjoy your mag—though sometimes a tad too sexy, it gives actresses and sex symbols a platform to address what's *really* on their minds.

Nicole Roache
Ottawa, Ontario

EXCERPTS

Your 7:17 article on producer Jim Dudleson ("A Sexy TV Series Spawns CREEPSHOW 3" by Dan Scapperotti) contains a photo credit error. On page 56, Deanna Merryman is incorrectly identified as Victoria Vogel, the "hotel's tennis pro." Enclosed is a photo of the REAL Victoria Vogel, who I am sure would have loved the publicity.

I was the key makeup artist on HOT SPRING HOTEL for its five weeks of shooting in Palm Springs, and had a great time frolicking with Mr. Dudleson and his entourage of beauties in the summer heat. Hats off to you for your article.

Maria Sandoval
Taurus Entertainment, CA



Devin De Vasquez is gamely competing with "L.A.'s stereotypical constricts." She describes SOCIETY as "my weirdest film so far."

Could you update the latest developments of these very decorative femmes? Angel Boris (Emma on BEVERLY HILLS 90210), Diane Franklin (BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE), Devin De Vasquez (SOCIETY), Samantha Phillips (PHANTASM II) and Kirsten Baker (her "moonlight swim" in FRIDAY THE 13, PART II was the only memorable thing about the whole damn series).

Tom Bendix
New York, NY

[*Though they had honed burgeoning careers as thespians with torrid but effortless sex appeal, Franklin and Baker abruptly dropped out of the business. Ms. Boris recently co-starred with Ashley Laurence (HELLRAISER) in WARLOCK: THE END OF INNOCENCE. Both actresses have been interviewed for* FF. *De Vasquez is currently shooting THE TRUTH ABOUT MEN AND DOGS, and has been cast as Casper Van Dien's girlfriend in "a futuristic baseball movie." She's also co-producing "something along the lines of centerfold videos" and has written a TV pilot titled POT LUCK ("It's about beautiful women finding love in the '90s.") And Ms. Phillips is currently a D.J. on a popular L.A. radio station.*]

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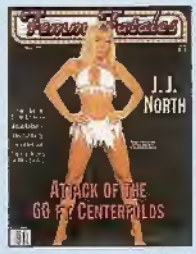
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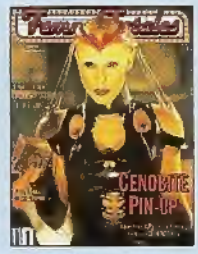
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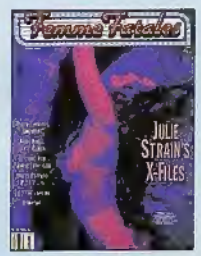
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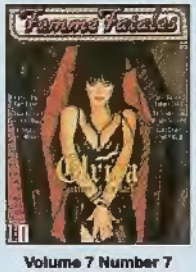
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